The World's Classics

CXVII

AESCHYLUS

OXFORD: HORACE HART
PRINTER TO THE UNIVERSITY

AESCHYLUS

THE

SEVEN PLAYS IN ENGLISH VERSE

BY

LEWIS CAMPBELL, M.A.

HON. LL.D., HON. D.LITT.

EMERITUS PROFESSOR OF GREEK IN THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS

HON. FELLOW OF BALLIOL COLLEGE OXFORD



NEW EDITION, REVISED

HENRY FROWDE

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

LONDON, NEW YORK AND TORONTO

AESCHYLUS.

Born at Eleusis	B.C. 5
Died at Gela, in Sicily	B.C. 4

The present translation was first published in 'The World's Classics' in 1906.

TO MRS. FLEEMING JENKIN

DEAR MRS. JENKIN,

You saw the beginning of this work, and bu for you, I doubt if it would ever have been begun. Yo have been kindly interested in its progress, and, i revising it, I have owed much to your friendly criticism To whom, then, can it more fittingly be inscribed?

I remain, ever yours sincerely

LEWIS CAMPBELL.

'The harmonious mind
Poured itself forth in all-prophetic song.'
SHELLEY, *Prom. Unbound*

'Hearted in each heart,
Athenai, undisgraced as Pallas' self.'
R. BROWNING, *Aristoph. Apology.*

CONTENTS

PREFACE

In 1877 Professor Fleeming Jenkin and his amateur dramatic company had honoured me by producing in Edinburgh and afterwards in St. Andrews my translation of the *Trachinian Maidens* of Sophocles.

In 1897 they asked me to translate the *Choephoroe*. This play was pronounced unsuitable for a private stage. But in the Spring of the following year the *Agamemnon*, in a version which I had prepared, with some abridgement of the lyrical parts, was acted by them before select audiences in Edinburgh and in London. This version was revised and completed; and, thus encouraged, I gradually finished the translation of the seven plays, which Messrs. Kegan Paul & Co. published in 1890. I have to thank that firm for their permission to republish in this cheaper form, although the larger edition is not yet exhausted.

In revising my work for the present issue I have altered some things in deference to recent critical studies, amongst which those of Professor Tucker and Dr. Walter Headlam deserve special mention.

The numbering of the lines for reference is taken from Mr. Arthur Sidgwick's Oxford edition of the text.

PREFATORY NOTE TO THE EDITION OF 1890

Twice within human memory have great poets been heartily satisfied with the time in which they lived. The love of Dante for Florence, or of Milton for the people of England, was associated with an ideal not yet realized, and, like Victor Hugo's proud affection for the city of Paris, was dashed with bitter experiences in the recent past. But of Spenser and Shakespeare in England, and of Aeschylus in Hellas, it may be said that, for them, the ideal and the actual were interfused. They imagined nothing better than that the glory of Athens or of the reign of Elizabeth might spread and continue. The exultation of Virgil and Horace in the rule of Augustus is less unmingled, and less intensely real. And the pride which Aeschylus took in the renown of Athens was associated with a profound religious feeling. The secret of her triumph was, as he regarded it, that principle of Right, which is the corner-stone of civilization, and alone makes national life worth living. And he found the sanction of that principle in the religion of Hellas, which he interpreted as an Eleusinian mystic, perhaps also an Orphic or Pythagorean theosophist, and certainly as an original thinker and prophet. His epitaph[1] shows that he was first a citizen and soldier, and then a poet, although he is not for that reason less a poet. His admirer, Aristophanes,[2] describes him as 'nourished in spirit by Demeter and her

[1] 'This monument in Gela's fruitful plain
Doth Aeschylus, Euphorion's son, contain.
Of Athens he;—whose might the Mede will own,
That met him on the field of Marathon.'

[2] Ar. *Frogs*, 884, 885.

mysteries.' What else he was, we have to gather from his plays.

As a minister of Dionysus in his great festival, at a time when Choerilus, Pratinas, and Phrynichus had already developed the art of Thespis into a lyrical drama, he came upon the scene with a strength of conviction only rivalled by the splendour of his imagination. His mind soared far beyond the reach of his contemporaries, but he more than satisfied them by the concrete form in which his thoughts were presented.

Imagination works by contrast, and to emphasize the fame of Athens the poet took his audience back into a time when the claim of the Suppliant for protection could still be matter for debate, while the marriage law was not yet fixed, or away to a region in which liberty was not yet born, nor the reign of law inaugurated, making them sympathize with the sorrow of the alien people whom they had conquered. Or, again, by holding up to them the patriotism of Eteocles and the piety of Amphiaraus he took a more direct way of inspiring their zeal, at the same time reminding them, through the unnatural horrors of the house of Thebes, of the domestic sanctities that had been so violated in early days. Once more, as in the *Oresteia*, he exhibited a pageant of wild justice, ending with the triumph of equity; or, as in the *Prometheus* trilogy, he sought to raise his audience to a height from which they might contemplate Deity in the making. But over all there reigned one thought, one image, one dominant idea: the idea of righteousness, as the goal towards which all human actions are inevitably drawn or driven: the resultant of all forces, whether consentaneous or opposed; the rewarder, the punisher, the final reconciler. Meanwhile, tragedy proper was being created—only once again to be renewed in equal strength when Shakespeare wrote his *Hamlet*, *Lear*, *Othello*, and *Macbeth*. The growth of this young giant goes on apace from the *Persae* to the *Septem*, from the *Septem* to the *Agamemnon* and *Choephoroe*; in which last plays, as Fleeming Jenkin said with pardonable

aggeration, 'the real Greek drama' for the first ne appears.

'In the scenes with Cassandra before the murder, id with Clytemnestra afterwards, the poet was swept vay by his dramatic feelings, and in writing these enes he invented the real Greek drama, not by plan orethought, but by the inspiration of his subject. In rm he adheres to an address from one actor to the horus, but the spirit is changed. The arrival of gamemnon, the prophecy of Cassandra, the murder the King, and the boast of Clytemnestra form a real 'amatic representation of a fact happening then and iere. The Chorus changed its character,[1] and the ords assigned to it might have been spoken by a few :rsons on the stage. They became actors, whereas :fore they had been alternately singers of a sacred ymn and listeners to set speeches. The proposition iat Aeschylus invented a new art while writing the *gamemnon* is not a mere figure of speech. The *hoëphoroi*, which follows, is a complete drama from :ginning to end. The Chorus takes part in the action iroughout, and, when the stage was empty, recited ily such short poems as might serve to divide acts. i its arrangement the *Choëphoroi* might have been lanned by Sophocles! As usual, when we pass from ie artistic form to that next evolved, something was iined, something lost. As a dramatic entertainment, ir more was gained than lost; and if even now the *Agamemnon* and *Choëphoroi* were successively *acted*, the spectators would, we venture to say, prefer the later play. The long hymns of the *Agamemnon*, so beautiful to read, would be a trifle dull recited by bands of performers. The declamation of the single actor about the taking of Troy, or the shipwreck of Menelaus, magnificent poetry as it is, would be something

[1] This remark needs qualification. The part of the Chorus, like all else, is more dramatically handled; but the Chorus is *not more, but, if anything, less prominent* as a person of the drama than in the *Supplices* and *Persae*.

like a reading of Milton; we should admire, but remain cold. The play would not begin till Agamemnon arrived, and it would be over by the time Clytemnestra had finished her great speech after Agamemnon's death. In the *Choëphoroi*, on the contrary, the interest is dramatic from first to last. The return of Orestes, the present woe of Electra, the recognition of the brother and sister, the invocation of Agamemnon, whose hidden shade listens to son and daughter, the meeting of Clytemnestra and her son, the death of Aegisthus, the pleading for life or death between mother and son, with the final frenzy of Orestes, form one unbroken chain of domestic scenes of the most perfect kind, ending in a climax far finer than that of the *Agamemnon*. Yet the translations of the *Agamemnon* outnumber those of the *Choëphoroi* perhaps by ten to one, precisely because the *Agamemnon* is as much a poem as a drama, while the *Choëphoroi* is above all a play.'[1]

In what remains of this note I propose to touch briefly on Aeschylus' manner of conceiving and presenting (1) Mythology and Legend, (2) Crime and Retribution, (3) War, (4) the Popular Will (*vox populi*), (5) the Characters of Women, (6) the State of the Dead; and to conclude with a few remarks on the seven extant tragedies.

1. *Mythology.*—Many students of Aeschylus have been struck with the boldness of his innovations in mythology. Herodotus observes (ii. 156) that Aeschylus *alone of poets* has made Artemis the daughter of Demeter; and he accuses him of taking this from the Egyptians.[2] Nor is the poet consistent with himself. Themis in the *Prometheus* is the same with Earth;[3] in the *Eumenides* she is Earth's daughter. These and similar facts are puzzling to those who have not realized the different parts borne by mythology and

[1] *Papers of Fleeming Jenkin*, vol. i. p. 18.

[2] i.e. Isis = Demeter, Bubastis = Artemis.

[3] Prometheus, as a Titan, was a son of Earth, but for symbolic purposes he must be son of Themis.

custom severally in Greek religious life. The same people who went mad about the mutilation of the Hermae could revel in such free handling of Divine persons as we find in the Old Comedy. The truth is, that while religious custom lay upon them with a weight almost as deep as life, the changing clouds of mythology rested lightly on their minds, and were in their very nature, to some extent, the sport of fancy and imagination. This gave a 'liberty of prophesying,' of which Aeschylus was not slow to avail himself. The mythopoeic instinct was still at work in him, and suggested to him imaginative modes of giving plastic shape to thoughts that lay deep within his mind, and were already 'touched with emotion.'

Legend.—His treatment of legendary history is likewise free. In spite of Epic tradition, Mycenae and Sparta are expunged from the map of Hellas for the period of the Trojan War. Agamemnon and Menelaus are joint Kings of Argos. In the *Supplices* the poet carries us back to a still earlier time, when King Pelasgus ruled all the region southward from Epirus and Thrace, making Argos the centre of his government. Similarly in the *Niobe*, Tantalus described the limits of his Phrygian Kingdom.[1] Such instances afford strong illustration both of the unfixed condition of Greek heroic legend, and of the boldness of Aeschylus in his employment of it.

2. *Crime and Retribution.*—The plays of Aeschylus may well be left to read their own moral. Each drama presents a special aspect of the interplay of character and destiny. But in order to catch the peculiar ethical note in this great poet it is worth while to compare him for a moment with Herodotus. In the moral world which the historian loves to paint, not pride merely, but prosperity of itself insures a fall. The Xerxes of Herodotus works his own destruction, it is true; but he is brought to this by the irresistible leadings of a Divine power. 'It was to be so' (*ἔδει οὕτω γενέσθαι*); and when

[1] Fr. 158 (Nauck).

the good counsel of Artabanus had all but prevailed, the dream was sent by God to bring it to nought. The Xerxes of Aeschylus falls under the censure of Darius for his impious recklessness in listening to evil counsellors, which had *hastened on the destruction which had been prophesied indeed, but might otherwise have been delayed.* The poet here already diverges from the crude notion of Nemesis and Divine envy, from which he makes the Chorus of the *Agamemnon* explicitly dissent, contending that *sin* (*Agam.* 750, ff.), and not prosperity, is the prime cause of ruin. But when the ruin falls, it falls not on the individual alone. The solidarity of the family prevents that: and the consequence of one man's crime may be a curse that weighs upon a late posterity. Yet heroic character may be evinced even beneath the crushing burden of hereditary evil; and of this Orestes and Eteocles are examples. Orestes is saved so as by fire. For he acted under a Divine impulse, and his intention was just. Eteocles is carried down into the whirlpool of fraternal hatred, under the stress of his father's curse. Yet his nobleness is not effaced. For he has saved his country. Lastly, Aeschylus holds that Justice will triumph, but not necessarily now. Goodness shall be vindicated, but in the end of things.[1] The endurance of Prometheus is entirely noble. He suffers, but he will not repent. For the eye

[1] For a kindred thought, see Robert Browning's poems, especially the 'Reverie' in *Asolando*, concluding with the words:—

'I have faith such end shall be:
  From the first, Power was—I knew.
Life has made clear to me
  That, strive but for closer view,
Love were as plain to see.

'When see? When there dawns a day,
  If not on the homely earth,
Then yonder, worlds away,
  Where the strange and new have birth,
And Power comes full in play.'

of Themis, his mother, *Goddess of Right*, beholds that he is suffering unjustly.

3. *War.*—The finest soldiers have always been most alive to the horrors of the battlefield, and Aeschylus is not an exception. Tolstoi's Prince André hardly goes beyond him in this. The descriptions in *War and Peace* are more extended, but not more vivid, than Clytemnestra's imagining of the state of things in Troy after its capture, or the Theban women's apprehension of what happens in the sacking of a town. And in more than one place our poet has anticipated the peculiarly modern feeling that great conquerors have much to answer for. Even in the day of victory it is not forgotten that the victor is 'a man of blood,' nor that king-made wars are oppressive to the people.

4. *Vox populi.*—And a people's curse is to be feared. Even King Pelasgus must consult his citizens, before committing himself to a righteous cause. He is less absolute than Theseus in Sophocles. To the astonishment of Atossa it is told that the Athenians have no master, and are all the better soldiers for it. Eteocles, who has no other fear, fears the censure of the citizens, if he should fail. The murmurs of the folk form one of the many elements of gloom in the *Agamemnon*. And the falling away of popular respect and awe from the royal house is one of the premonitions of the fate of Clytemnestra and Aegisthus. In Aeschylus there is still the glad consciousness of new-found freedom, at one with law; whereas in Sophocles we trace something of the reaction towards oligarchy from the abuse of liberty. A different, not an inconsistent, note is struck in the *Eumenides*, where it appears that the security of a people's sovereignty rests on the due observance of law and equity. And in the *Prometheus* yet a higher strain is heard,—that all power, apart from wise beneficence, must come to nought.

5. *Women.*—The genius of Aeschylus is essentially masculine, and the place of women in his world is subordinate. He regards them with the tenderness of a strong nature, but the tenderness of sympathy is tinged

with conscious superiority. The only strong woman in his extant plays is Clytemnestra, the murderess, whose death remains unavenged: for the character of his Antigone is undeveloped; and his Electra is pathetically feminine, and not like the Sophoclean heroine. The Trojan captives of the *Choëphoroe* are profoundly embittered, and their vindictiveness is intense. They can incite to violence:—but they do not act in their own persons. The Lemnian women, in one of the lost dramas, must have been likewise fierce. The Danaïdes, in the play called after them, must have proved capable of action in the last resort; but in the *Supplices* the same persons are full of trepidation, and wholly dependent on their father's counsel. The Chorus in the *Seven against Thebes* are also markedly feminine. Their flurry and feverish excitement form the dramatic contrast to the manly self-possession of Eteocles, who treats them sternly, yet now and then with gentleness. But of all dramatic contrasts, that of Cassandra at once to Clytemnestra and Agamemnon is the most affecting. The fierce determination of the vengeful Queen is set in the most lurid possible light by her innocent victim, the most pathetic figure on the Greek or any stage. Cassandra has often been misconceived. Because of her prophetic gift she has been mistaken, as she herself prophetically complains, for a bold 'beggar priestess,' 'a forward babbler at the door' (*Agam.* 1274, 1195). Because she foresees horrors, and quakes before them, she is imagined as a ranting fury. But the evil which she foretells falls with equal weight on Agamemnon and herself, and although one single allusion to the Avenger is wrung from her at last, the thought uppermost in the spectator's mind throughout has been, or should have been, 'Oh, the pity of it!' 'The dainty princess, the wise prophetess, the beloved of deity, lost, ruined, fallen!' As the Chorus observe, upon her exit, 'This is more piteous than the ruin of pride.' Io's retrospect of her misfortunes has a peculiar pathos, and the daughters of Oceanus, at once superhuman and compassionate, trembling with awe and dread, yet not to

be divided in extremity from the sublime sufferer, afford one more example of the range of the poet's imagination, and of the tenderness and depth of his conception of the 'Ewig-weibliche.' His treatment of women in the extant plays makes us regret the loss of his *Niobe* and his *Callisto*.[1]

6. *State of the Dead.*—Aeschylus' belief in a future state (if the expression may be allowed) suggests a condition less shadowy than that implied in the Homeric poems,—less real, but also less remote from the concerns of this life, than that set forth by Sophocles. The grave of Oedipus (in the *Oed. Col.*) was to have a magical power, and he looks forward with satisfaction to the blood of his enemies saturating his corpse. This notion, however, stands alone in Sophocles, and it is not so much a thought of the poet's own, as one of the data of the fable on which he drew. But Atossa in approaching the monument of Darius, Orestes and Electra at their father's tomb, have the firmest belief that when the libation has been poured, the spirit of the dead will be revived and hear. He is present there in a peculiar sense, returning to the spot of earth where the body has been laid. On the other hand, the Ghost of Clytemnestra in the *Eumenides* is only a shade, and Darius bids his ancient comrades make the most of life even amid sorrows, seeing that there is no gladness in the grave whither they must go. The state to which Antigone looks forward is different from this, more substantial, although perchance as ineffectual. She will be herself there, and will find her kindred—not their shadows only. The manner of speech is different, and conveys a different belief. Other touches here and there in Aeschylus seem to involve some communication between the dead and living: as when Clytemnestra

[1] See Matthew Arnold's *Dramatic and Later Poems* (Merope), pp. 98-100:—

'But his mother, Callisto,

The guard-watched Bear.'

says that the spirits of the Trojan dead may 'cross the homeward way' for the victorious Greeks; or where the Danaïdes claim the help of Epaphus, though so far away.

7. *Humour.*—The broad humour which peers through the tragic business of the *Choëphoroe* in the speech of the Nurse must have been richly exemplified in Aeschylus' Satyric dramas. Perhaps the most characteristic remnant of it is the fragment of the 'Fire-kindling Prometheus,' where the Satyr, in playing with the strange element, is in danger of burning off his beard. That something of the grand manner remained even here appears from the fragment where the sounds of the 'bull-roarer,' or some exercise of the human voice resembling them, are described:—'Dread imitative bull-like bellowings.' This may belong, as Hermann thought, to the tragic treatment of Bacchic rites in the *Lycurgeia*. But it affords a valuable indication of the spirit in which Aeschylus approached the essentially Dionysiac aspect of his art. Other rustic or quasi-comic touches are the figure of the Watchman in the *Agamemnon*, and that of the Herald in the *Suppliants*.

The Plays.—(1) '*The Suppliants.*'—There is no record of the first performance of the *Supplices*. It was probably the first drama of a trilogy, of which the second part was the *Aegyptians* (i.e. sons of Aegyptus) and the third the *Danaïdes*. A certain *naiveté* of presentation, and also the rudimentary character of the moral and religious elements, as well as the prevalence of lyric measures and the prominent part taken by the Chorus, justify us in regarding this as an early play. It is in fact rather a Cantata than a tragedy. The poet had not yet attained the depth and breadth and height of his art.

(2) '*Persae.*'—The *Persae* was first put on the stage in 472, seven years after Plataea. It stands alone amongst the extant tragedies in treating, not myth or legend, but solid history, and history which the dramatist himself had helped to make. But an ideal treat-

ment is secured by the imaginative reversal of the ordinary Hellenic point of view, the great struggle being represented, not as it affected Hellas, but as it must have reacted on the Persian Court. No Greek is mentioned by name throughout the play. The *Persae* was the central tragedy of three that were produced at the same time—the *Phineus, Persae,* and *Glaucus of Potniae*—together with the Satyric drama of *Prometheus with the Fire,* referred to above. There is no apparent connexion between the subjects, and it is not certain that there was any such organic connexion between the plays as in the case of the *Lycurgeia,* the *Oedipodeia,* and the *Oresteia.*

(3) '*Seven against Thebes.*'—The *Seven against Thebes* was long believed to be the *second* drama of three, as the conclusion points forward either to an *Antigone* or an *Epigoni.* It is now known to have been the third and concluding tragedy of the *Oedipodeia,* being preceded by a *Laius* and an *Oedipus.* This shows that Aeschylus did not yet round off his trilogies so completely as he has done in that which happily remains entire. It also proves that the 'drama of reconciliation' was not necessary to an Aeschylean trilogy.

(4, 5, 6) *The 'Oresteia.'*—The *Oedipodeia* was performed in 467 B.C. Between this and the production of the *Agamemnon, Choëphoroe,* and *Eumenides,* there was an interval of nine years, which must have been well and fruitfully employed. For there is more of thought and power in these than in all the preceding plays.

(7) *The Promethean Trilogy.*—The precise date of the Promethean trilogy is unknown. But the structure and versification are not in the poet's earlier manner. And in the allusion to the eruption of Aetna and some other minute points, critics have found traces of his visit to Sicily, which is said to have taken place between 472 and 468 B.C. *Prometheus* is put last, not as being necessarily later than the *Oresteia,* but as being *sui generis* amongst the extant dramas, belonging to the class of superhuman plays, which included also the

Psychostasia, and perhaps the *Niobe*, and to which the *Eumenides* is partially related.

For further remarks the reader is referred to the notes at the end of this volume, and to the short introductions prefixed to the several plays.[1]

[1] See also the Translator's Essay on *Tragic Drama* (Smith, Elder & Co.), and *A Guide to Greek Tragedy* (Rivingtons); also *Religion in Greek Literature* (Longmans).

THE SUPPLIANTS

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA

Chorus of Danaïdes (Daughters of Danaüs).
DANAÜS.
PELASGUS, *the King.*
The Herald of the sons of Aegyptus.
Attendant Maidens.

SCENE—a sacred place between Argos and the sea.

TIME—prehistoric.

Aeschylus is fond of contemplating morality in the making. By throwing back imagination to a time when 'what is now Hellas was Pelasgia,' and Argos was the metropolis of a kingdom extending from Epirus to Cape Taenarum, he is able to represent the protection of the suppliant as a duty that was still open to debate, and also to recall an inchoate stage of the laws respecting marriage, and so to prepare for the interesting theme of the 'Danaïdes,' of which the only considerable fragment is part of the defence of Hypermnestra (or of Aphrodite on her behalf) for her 'splendid perfidy' in sparing her cousin-bridegroom, Lynceus, from assassination on the marriage night:—

'The holy Heaven longs for Earth's yielding breast,
Earth inly yearns to feel the fond embrace,
Heaven melting then descends in genial rain,
Quickening Earth's womb, that bears, to bless mankind,
Demeter's gifts, and yeanling flocks that graze.
From that moist marriage-rite the woods put on
Their pomp. The fault of Earth and Heaven is mine.'

The legend of Io, which forms the background of the story, connects the subject of this drama with that of the *Prometheus Bound*.

Danaüs and his daughters have just landed on the coast of Argolis. They are met by King Pelasgus, to whom the Danaïdes present their credentials of Argive descent, craving sanctuary from the violence of the sons of Aegyptus, who are seeking them in marriage. After some parleying, the king and his people undertake to give them refuge and protection. Then the sons of Aegyptus are seen approaching. They are preceded by a Herald who demands the persons of the maidens. He is repulsed, but threatens war, and the play ends doubtfully, one half of the Chorus, no doubt including Hypermnestra, appearing not altogether disinclined to yield to the inevitable seizure.

THE SUPPLIANTS

CHORUS.

LET the lord of suppliants smile
  On our ship-borne train, who come
From the sand-heapt mouths of Nile,
  Wafted o'er the wide sea-foam!
Exiles from the sacred land
  Bordering Syria's meads, we flee,
Not for guilt of murder banned
  By a people's just decree,
But because we durst not wed
  With Aegyptus' sons, our kin,
Hating with a holy dread
  Thought of that enforcèd sin.
Danaüs then, our prudent sire,
  Weighing all the desperate game,
Taking part with our desire,
  Deemed it best, as least in blame,—
Noblest in a choice of woe,—
  Launching forth in checkless flight,
O'er the briny wave to go,
  Guarded by a father's right,
Till we trode this Argive strand,
  Whence we trace our boasted line
Through the touch of Zeus's hand
  And his gentle breath divine,
Freeing Io from the pest
  Of the biting brize, that drave
That poor heifer, robbed of rest,
  Over lands and seas to rave.
Where then should we wanderers find
For our need a soil more kind?
Whither else direct our way
Armed with wreaths, the suppliant's sta

Land and city, stainless streams,
Gods that overlook this clime;
Tombs that hide, withdrawn from dreams,
Honoured souls of eldest time;
Zeus, great Saviour of pure homes,
Worshipped third when wine is poured,—
Kindly entrance 'neath yon domes
May ye one and all afford,
Breathing mercy from your land
On our female suppliant band,—
Ere our father's brother's race,
Forcing an abhorred embrace,
Make their own in our despite
Wedlock barred by Heaven and Right.
Ere their feet have touched your plain
Send them coursing o'er the main
Lashed with rainy winds, and driven
By hot thunderbolts from Heaven,
Till they founder 'mid the sweep
Of the wildly weltering deep.

Divine Protector, now beyond the sea, I 1
Son of the highest, the wandering heifer's child,—
For while she roamed, and cropped the flowery lea,
Zeus breathed on her, and, ever undefiled,
She felt the touch that filled her veins with thee,
And made her to be mother of us all;
Epaphus, named of Fate, on thee we call!

Here, mindful of our ancient mother's woes, I 2
Amid these grassy fields, her pasturage,
Clear present proofs of birth we shall disclose;
And all the past, a weird miraculous page,
Strange as the trouble whence our race arose,
Convincing even to doubters shall appear;
Let but the people lend a patient ear.

Haply some bird-diviner in the vale II 1
Of Argolis, perceiving our sad plaint,
Shall think he hears the pity-moving wail
Of Tereus' wife, mourning without restraint,
The hawk-pursued, despairing nightingale.

She mourns the strangeness of an alien land, II 2
  Of alien streams; but more for that wild blow,
Unnaturally stricken, unkindly planned,
  That gave her child his timeless overthrow,
Felled by a cruel mother's wrathful hand.

I too, like her, in soft Ionian numbers, III 1
  Indulging sorrow, tear this tender cheek
By Egypt's suns embrowned, and wake from slumbers
  Of careless maidenhood a heart once weak—
Unexercised in pain. I cull from grief
  Soul-moving strains, fear-smitten to the core
By mine own kin, and pleading for relief
  In this my flight from yonder faint-blue shore.

Who cares for me? Gods of our lineage proud, III 2
  Listen with heed: look on the righteous cause!
Yield not our flower to lordship unallowed;
  True to yourselves, uphold grave Hymen's laws,
And ban rude violence. Even in war
  Afflicted wights find shelter and sure hold
Beside your altars—evermore a bar
  To lawless force, by fear of Heaven controlled.

Let highest in mind be most in might. IV 1
  The choice of Zeus what charm may bind?
His thought, 'mid Fate's mysterious night,
  A growing blaze against the wind
Prevails:—whate'er the nations say,
His purpose holds its darkling way.

What thing his nod hath ratified IV
  Stands fast, and moves with firm sure tread,
Nor sways, nor swerves, nor starts aside.
  A mazy thicket, hard to thread,
A labyrinth undiscovered still,
The far-drawn windings of his will.

Down from proud towers of hope
  He throws infatuate men,
Nor needs, to reach his boundless scope,
  The undistressful pain

Of godlike effort; on his holy seat
He thinks, and all is done, even as him seems most
meet.

Let him behold and see V 2
What crookèd thoughts of crime
That swarthy brood, flushed with desire of me,
Plan in their youthful prime,—
Stung with mad passions in resistless throng,
And never, save through loss, to be convinced of
wrong.

I all the while, lamenting this dire lot VI 1
With cries and groans, and salt tears streaming hot,
In sounds beseeming dirges for the dead,—
Ah well-a-day! the mourner's way,—
Grace with this wail my living maidenhead.
Dear land of hills, my voice, though alien grown,
Implores thee with a still-remembered tone,
While ruthless I destroy with many a rent
This flaxen veil of Tyrian ornament.

If all end well, and death remain aloof, VI 2
Full swiftly shall the gods have ample proof
Of grateful hearts with offerings brimming o'er.
O troublous hour! O hidden power!
This swelling wave upbears me—to what shore?
Dear land of hills, my voice, though alien grown,
Implores thee with a still-remembered tone,
While ruthless I destroy with many a rent
This flaxen veil of Tyrian ornament.

With harmless wafture of a temperate wind VII 1
Broad blades of Nile-made bark, papyrus-lined,
(Safe convoy o'er an untempestuous sea),
Have brought us. Here, shaping the end, may He,
The Father all-beholding, lend his grace,
That Io's high-born race,
Saved from dishonouring her from whom they came,
May 'scape the soilure of their virgin fame.—

And may his child, Artemis, ever kind, VII 2
Look on us maidens with a maiden's mind.
Defending our unscathed integrity,
Pursuing our pursuing foes, may she
With darts o'erwhelm them from her holy place:
That Io's high-born race,
Saved from dishonouring her from whom they came,
May 'scape the soilure of their virgin fame.

Rather than marry with the men we fear, VIII 1
This dark-hued countenance by Helios burned—
If Lords Olympian will not hear—
To lowlier Hades shall be turned.
To him through strangling will we go,
Boon welcomer of wearied souls below,
To him these sacred branches bear,
Him visit with importunate prayer,
Supreme o'er realms of night
As Zeus o'er realms of light.
Ah, Zeus! heal Io's ban and bane!
Heaven's large benevolence and counsel sage
I find o'erborne by Hera's boisterous rage,—
Wind after storm, cloud following rain.

Zeus then (forbid it, Fate!) would be reviled VIII 2
With blasphemy too hideous to be told,
How he hath scorned his heifer's child,
Begotten by himself of old,
His own son Epaphus, whose seed
Forsaking in their piteous need,
He turns his face from their despair
Nor heeds their unavailing prayer.—
Nay, bending from on high,
Hear thou our inmost sigh!
Ah, Zeus! heal Io's ban and bane!
Heaven's large benevolence and counsel sage
I find o'erborne by Hera's boisterous rage,—
Wind after storm, cloud following rain.

DANAÜS

DAN. Children, take heed—since with good heed ye are come,
Through me, that shaped this voyage, your agèd sire;
Whose words, now that ye tread the solid ground,
With no less caution grave within your souls.
Yon cloud of dust, a silent harbinger,
Foretells a coming troop, whose grinding wheels,
Whirled on strong axletrees, even now I hear.
And now I see with steeds and chariot-rims
A shielded host, spearmen in proud array.
Methinks the leaders of this land are come
To view us, moved by tidings they have heard:
It may be, without harm; it may be, whetted
To savage ire they stir this army on.
In either case, O maidens, 'tis most meet
Ye settle on this mound, and supplicate
The people's gods that sit in conclave here:—
The altar's refuge is a shield of proof,
Mightier than fencèd wall.—With swiftest speed
Run hither, and, in solemn wise, upholding
With your left hands those white-wreathed suppliant boughs,
Wherein the God of mercy takes delight,
Make seemly answer to the stranger men,
Telling the motive of your innocent flight,
With pity-moving, reverent, pleading words,
Becoming such unlooked-for visitants.
Let all your accents without boldness fall,
And from chaste brows and free, untroubled gaze,
Let modesty bespeak your sober mind.
In speech be neither sudden nor too slow:
Soon ruffled is the race that harbours here.
As needy refugees, be it yours to yield.
Boldness in speech never became the weak.

CHO. Thy prudent counsel meets our cautious mood,
Dear sire! And these thy precepts, fraught with care,
Our memories shall watchfully preserve.
Let Zeus, the parent of our race, behold!

AN. Then haste, but firmly hold the wands ye bear.

HO. Forthwith I would be seated at thy side.

. . . .

HO. *Zeus*, save thy suppliants, pity our distress!

AN. Let him behold you with a gracious eye.

HO. If he vouchsafe, the end shall yet be well

AN. Now call on this his wingèd messenger.

HO. We call upon the Sun's all-fostering ray.

AN. And Phoebus, once a fugitive from heaven.

HO. Holy Apollo, feel our lot like thine.

AN. May he regard and zealously defend!

HO. Whom else of this great conclave should I call?

AN. I see the trident here, a god's dread sign.

HO. He sped us hither. May he welcome too!

AN. And here is Hermes in his Grecian guise.

HO. Herald of good! May he proclaim us free.

AN. Now worship at the shrines of all these lords
jointly, as ye crowd the sacred place
ereto ye cling like flocking doves that fly
m hawks of kindred hue—O hateful kin,
it ruffles its own race! Pollution deep
: bird to ravin on bird's flesh! Pollution
less profound to force the unwilling bride
m her reluctant sire. Not even in death
ll he who hath done it be assoilèd there
wanton criminality. Men say,
other Zeus beneath, among the dead,
es final judgement on all wrongful deeds.
circumspect, and order your reply,
that your cause may win deserved success.

By native guides. Yet duly ye have laid
Your suppliant branches on the altar-steps
Of all our people's gods assembled here.
This point alone argues a Grecian strain.
Much else one might conjecture, but fair speech
In present conference should make all clear.

CHO. You note our raiment truly. But to whom
Address we this discourse, mere citizen,
Or warden of some fane, or chief o' the state?

KING. When I have said, take heart, and answer me.
Earth-born Palaechthon was my sire; I am named
Pelasgus, and bear rule o'er all this land.
Whence, rightly named from me their sovereign,
Pelasgian are they called who reap these fields.
Of all the region Strymon's holy stream
Divides, the westward portion owns my power.
I reach to the Perrhaebians and the coasts
Past Pindus, neighbouring the Paeonian tribe,
And the Dodonian mountains. There the sea
Sets her moist limit to my sway. I am lord
Within those boundaries. But this fair plain
Is Apian ground, so called in thankfulness
To Apis, a renowned physician here,
Who coming from Naupactus over sea,
Apollo's child inspired with healing power,
Cleansed all the land from man-destroying plagues
Of monsters whom great Earth, infested sore
With stains of ancient murder, gave to light,
Children of wrath, a clustering serpent-brood.
Release therefrom, through searching remedies,
Apis effected for this Argive land,
And won remembrance at each hour of prayer.
Ye have my tokens: now declare your own;
Tell forth your pedigree; unfold your case.
But know, this people loves not long discourse.

CHO. Our tale is brief and clear. Of Argos we
Claim lineage—the fair-childed heifer's seed.
All this with proofs will I confirm for true.

KING. Unlikely to my hearing sounds your tale,
O stranger maids, that Argive is your race.

More African than Grecian is your mien,
Nowise resembling women native here.
Old Nile might nourish such a waterplant.
The Cyprian likeness may be traced in you
Stamped by male artists on a female mould.
Or bare ye but the quiver, I might guess
Full well that ye were Amazons, who feed
On flesh and know not men; or Indian womer
Of whom I hear as wandering far and wide
With pack-saddles on trotting dromedaries,
And dwelling near the Aethiopian folk.
Inform me, then, more perfectly, what way
Your seed and parent-stock from Argos came.

CHO. 'Tis said that in this Argive land ere:
Io was doorkeeper of Hera's Fane.

KING. Certes she was; strong Rumour ma
know.
Is't said that Zeus to mortal maid came near

CHO. Yea, and that Hera knew, and would pr

KING. How ended such a high-enkindled fe

CHO. Your goddess turned the woman to a

KING. But was the hornèd heifer safe from

CHO. He took the likeness of a leaping bull

KING. What then contrived the mighty Qu
Heaven?

CHO. She set a sleepless watch, with myriad

KING. What all-seeing herdman of one heifer?

CHO. Argus, the child of Earth,—whom I
slew.

KING. What framed she more for the poor
annoy?

CHO. A goading gad-fly, giving her no rest.

KING. 'Tis called the 'brize' by neighbours
Nile.

CHO. This drave her, banished, on a distant

KING. Your tale sorts fitly with the truths I

CHO. Canopus and then Memphis saw her co

. . . .

CHO. Zeus with a finger-touch begat a child

KING. How then was named the heifer's birth c

CHO. Think of the eye that scans you from above. II 2
Yea, think of him who shields all wretched wights,
And, when their prayer is baffled, wreaks their wrong.
The wrath of Zeus, befriender of the oppressed,
Inexorably attends on their complaint.

KING. Aegyptus' sons perchance have rights in you
As your next kinsmen. Should they press that claim
Under your country's law, who could oppose?
Needs must you plead some clear Aegyptian rule
That bars your persons from their government.

CHO. Heaven keep me from the hand of my male kin! III 1
Wherever Earth beholds the stars, I will fly
That hated wedlock. Choose the pious part,
And righteousness supreme shall fight for thee.

KING. Make not me chooser; for the choice is hard.
The state must share my counsel, as I said,
Though I be sovereign; lest my people say,
Should aught untoward be sequel to this act,
'Honouring chance-comers, thou hast ruined Argos.'

CHO. Kinsman to both, determining the event, III 2
Zeus holds the scales, assigning rightfully
Guilt to the wicked, pureness to the just.
What after-trouble is thine, if thou deal justly?

KING. Deep thought is needed for our safety here,
A calm clear eye, serene and temperate,
That, like the diver, searches out the abyss,
To find an issue scathless for the state,
And rich with honour for ourselves,—that neither
Quarrel enforce captivity, nor we,
Yielding up you that sit as suppliants
Of these our gods, bring down to dwell with us
The grievous Power that visits all such wrong,
The fell Destroyer, who delivereth not
Even the dead in Hades. Said I well?
Is there not need of soul-preserving thought?

CHO. Take thought for piety, take thought for right: I 1
Befriend us with true care,
Give not us over to despair,
Who, driven from far with rude enforcèd flight,
Make to thy gods our prayer!

See me not dragged a captive from this seat, I 2
Of deities manifold the worshipped shrine!
Let not the men prevail! O absolute lord,
Their insolence abhorred
Discover and defeat.
Beware of wrath divine.

Endure not thou to see thy suppliant led II 1
From sanctuary along,
(O deed of impious wrong!)
Held by the fine-woven harness of my head,
With ruffian hands and strong!

Whichever cause thou favourest in thy choice, II 2
Whate'er the act thou willest, there awaits
Thy children and thy house like trial of war.
Such truth oracular
Whispers the sovran voice
Of Zeus, and the ancient Fates.

KING. I have now bethought me, and it comes to this—
The ship of reason to this strand is borne—
A mighty war impends, inevitable,
With these or those. The cable holds my bark
To that firm mooring-place, and there she's fixed.
No end is possible without distress.
Yet far from equal are the issues here.
For though a house be ravaged of its store,
Till poverty and misery overflow,
Zeus, lord of produce, may compensate all;
And though a tongue may shoot forth bolts undue,
To stir men's spleen and gall their inmost s[illegible]
Yet words may salve the wound that words ha[illegible]
But bloodshedding 'twixt kinsmen to preven[illegible]

Full many a victim slain in sacrifice
To many gods were meet, to heal that harm.
Religiously I must avoid such strife.
Let me be skilless rather than prove wise
For mischief! May the event bely my dread!

CHO. Hear the conclusion of our patient plea.

KING. Speak on. Your words will not escape mine ear.

CHO. Our robes are girded with these twisted bands.

KING. Beseeming well your feminine estate.

CHO. A rich resource, be sure, is ours herein.

KING. What utterance now will pass thy lips? Say on.

CHO. If to this troop thou promise not sure aid——

KING. What riddance will your girdles bring to pass?

CHO. Strange offerings shall adorn this sanctuary.

KING. A riddling sentence! Plainly speak your mind.

CHO. We will hang ourselves forthwith on these your gods.

KING. Ye cut my heart, as with a scourge.

CHO. Ay, now
Thou understandest my words; I have made thee see.

KING. In vain I wrestle with this perilous case.
'Tis troublous every way. The rising flood
Of teeming sorrows rushes to o'erwhelm.
I am plunged in seas of woe unfathomable,
And find no harbourage, no further shore.
If I shall fail to satisfy your need,
Ye threaten me with horrors unsurpassed,
Pollution irredeemable. But if
Before our ramparts I stand forth and fight
To the utterance with Aegyptus' sons, your kin,
A dear expense, bitter to bear, were this,
That men for women's sake should stain the ground
Yet needs must I revere the wrath of Zeus
The suppliant's God. 'Tis man's supremest fear.
Thou, reverend sir, father of these pure maids,

Take in thine arms those wool-wreathed boughs, and lay them
Before another sanctuary, where all
The dwellers in our city may behold
These visible tokens of your sore distress,
Lest my report of you should pass for nought.
This people love to cavil at their king.
It may be, those who see your suppliant guise
May feel compassion, and the folk at large
Be touched with kindness for you. None so cold
Whose heart inclines not to befriend the weak.

DAN. We have gained one point, much valued, to have found
In thee a patron so considerate.
But send an escort of the natives here
To point my way, and make mine errand known,
That I may find the altars 'fore those fanes
Where dwell your state's protecting deities,
And through your streets may pass without annoy.
Our garb is foreign here, and strange our mien.
Nile fosters not like forms with Inachus.
Take heed security breed not dismay
Friend hath slain friend ere now, not knowing him.

KING (*to the attendants*). Go ye, for well the stranger speaks, and guide
His feet to our mid city's altar places,
The dwellings of our gods. Nor, as ye go,
Speak much to those ye meet, while ye conduct
This mariner whom here we suppliant found.
[*Exit* DANAUS

CHO. Our sire hath your commands. Then let him go.
What shall we do? Where dost thou 'point us safety?

KING. Leave there those tokens of your trouble past.

CHO. These boughs? I obey thy gesture and thy words.

KING. Now turn thy steps [illegible]

CHO. How should unhallow[illegible] head?

KING. Though your pursuer have wings, we will
not yield you.
CHO. But if he have fangs sharper than serpents'
teeth ?
KING. Speak gently. No harsh word was spoken
to thee.
CHO. Forgive the impatience of a heart that fears.
KING. A woman's fears are ever uncontrolled.
CHO. Thy words are comforting. So be thy deeds.
KING. Your father will not leave you long forlorn.
I go to assemble all this populace,
And turn the public mind to a friendly mood;
To instruct thy father, too, what things to say.
Remain ye, therefore, and entreat with prayer
This country's gods to grant you your desires:
To compass which event I now depart.
May smooth Persuasion and Success go with me! [*Exit*

CHORUS. I 1

thou of blessèd gods most blest,
f dignities the topmost crest,
eus, lord of lords, amidst thy glory, hear!
et that be done which calms our fear.
Hate and avert the crime the men would do,
And where those purpling waves appear,
Whelm the accursèd bark rowed by the swarthy crew. I 2

Renew the tale of kindness past
And let the fond remembrance last.
The women here are offspring of thy love,
When touching Io from above
Thou didst create our lineage with thy hand.
May we from hence no more remove,—
No longer aliens be, but inmates of the land. II 1

Exiled from Egypt, I come back
To find the old familiar track.
'Twas here the myriad-eyed one gazed
On our poor mother while she grazed
And cropped the flowery herbage sweet.
'Twas hence with brize-bewildered feet

e passed through many a mortal race,
ll, where the continents divide,
e measured the foredestined space,
nd crossed the limit of the billowy tide.

rough *Asia* rushing, and through all II 2
ado Phrygia's region pastoral,
e passed the Mysian citadels
f Teuthras, and the Lydian dells,
ilician mounts, Pamphylian fields,
reams, whose perennial water yields
finite wealth,—through all the fares,
nd through the land of countless grain,
he land abounding with strange wares,
he land of Aphrodite, rich in grain.

ill, 'neath the winged drover's goad III 1
raversing all that devious road,
he reached the life-maintaining mead
hat southern snow storms feed,
'avoured of Zeus, where wandering all abroad,
Nile's healthful waters banish every bane.
Into that mystic plain
Comes Hera's bacchanal, breeze-distraught,
Transformed, dismantled, shamed, o'erwrought
With weariness and still-returning pain.

The mortal inmates of that land III 2
With heart appalled and visage wanned
Were portent-stricken and sore amazed,
As on that form they gazed,
And now the maiden, now the heifer scanned,
Strange bovine nature intermixed with human,
Part cow, part tender woman
Who then might soften the wild distress
Of Io's brize-driven wandering loneliness,
Or make her tale of tribulation less?

'Twas Zeus, the lord of inexhaustible years: IV 1
He calmed her alien fears,
And by a touch restored her injured mind,
Bade violence, by harmless power confined,

Vexes no more; the breath of god dispels
Her stony trance, and once again there wells
From honour's fount the tender grace of tears.
Of Zeus the genuine breed then came to Earth.
And heavenly was that unoffending birth
Of him whoso line hath prospered brightly and long. IV 2
Till earth takes up the song,
'Of Zeus the authentic race is here displayed,
The genial issue of the wandering maid.'
Who else could quell the overmastering league
Of troubles raised by Hera's wild intrigue?
To whom save Zeus belongs undoing of wrong?
The deed was his, and his, believe it well,
The race of Epaphus whereof we tell.

To whom then of the gods with holier right V 1
Should I appeal to aid me with his might?
With his own hand he planted erst the seed
Wherefrom we sprang; author of every deed,
Eldest artificer, giving to wisdom speed.
Not hastening work beneath a master's eye, V 2
As one who on a mightier doth rely,
Or lowly worshippeth a lordlier throne:
With Zeus alone, thought, word, and deed are one;
Whate'er he wills, he say'th, and when he say'th, 'tis done.

Re-enter DANAUS.

DAN. Be of good cheer, my daughters. All is well.
This people's heart is sound. Their votes are given.
CHO. Hail, reverend sire! Right welcome is thy news—
But say, what bearing hath the full decree,
Or in what sense those many hands were shown.
DAN. Unanimous was the Argive folk's resolve,
Reviving youth within mine aged frame.
The bright sky bristled with right hands in air.
From that great crowd, confirming this decree:
That we should share the freedom of their soil,

Reverencing this piteous throng,
Through the grace of Zeus made strong;

Siding not with man-made laws, I 2
Scorning not the woman's cause,
But regarding in their thought
That which none may set at nought,
Nor resist, and flee from bane.
Who may stand the crushing strain
Of pollution on his home
Pressing with the weight of doom?
These revere the suppliant maids
Whom the Lord of mercy aids;
They revere the strain divine
Mingled with our ancient line.
Pure, then, shall their altars prove,
Pleasing to the gods above.

With these olive-boughs arrayed, II 1
Sheltered 'neath their sacred shade,
Peal we forth our heartfelt prayer,
Thrilling through the liberal air.
May no plague your people thin,
Ne'er may faction from within
Stain your streets with homebred strife;
Still be spared all youthful life;
Let not Ares cull your flower
With his homicidal power,—
Ares, unresisted rover,
Aphrodite's restless lover.

Let old men and matrons bend II 2
Where thrice-hallowed priests attend
The altar, heaped with fragrant gifts,
That clear flame to Heaven uplifts,—
So be blest your aftertime,
Honouring all the Powers sublime,
Him in chief, whose hoary name
Still protects the stranger's claim.
Ever from each bounteous field
Let boon Earth fresh tribute yield;

Artemis with g
Watch your lat

Plague that wit
Come not near,
Making all you
With a worse t
Void of music,
Noisy with a n
Spreading mise
Fell diseases' dismal swarm
Settle far from every head
That is laid on Argive bed.
Great Apollo look with ruth
Upon all your tender youth!

Zeus at every season bless
Your rich land with fruitfulness;
As they graze beside the stream
May your flocks with eanlings teem;
Still may every worshipped Power
Help you at the needful hour,—
Most of all the heavenly Muse.
Let your poets pay their dues
At each shrine with songs of worth.
Purely let the voice give forth
Every reverence-breathing word,
With the lyre in apt accord!

Let your rulers hold in awe
High degree and holy law,
Swaying with far-sighted skill
Toward wise aims the popular will.
Ere they arm the war's array
For the rash contentious fray,
Let them fair proposals bring
To remove the offence's sting,
Healing what their foes resent,
With unarmed arbitrament.

Let them honour, as of old,
All the Gods, your town that hold,

With processions laurelled bright,
And the oxen-slaughtering rite.
Glory to forefathers given
Keeps the great behest of Heaven.
Third on Justice' roll doth stand
That infallible command,—
Justice, highest name on earth,
Worshipped as of heavenly worth.

DAN. Dear daughters, I commend that pious hymn.
But hear, and start not, while your father tells
Unwelcome tidings, unforeseen and strange.
From this high platform where ye suppliant knelt
I see the ship. 'Tis theirs beyond a doubt,—
Hull, sails, and tackling unmistakable,
And prow with eyes that scour the forward way,
While she obeys too surely, being our foe,
The paddle at her stern directing her.
And now the men on board are plain to see,
Dark limbs appearing out of garments white.
Nor less remarkably her convoy swarms
With smaller craft around her. She herself
Their leader, now approaching land, hath lowered
Her canvas, and all hands are at the oars.
In quietness, then, and modest confidence
Attend, and cling to these protectors here,
Till I bring human advocates to aid.
Some herald or commission may arrive
And claim your persons as of right. But fear not,
Let them not startle you. This shall not be.—
Yet lest our help should be delayed, 'tis well
Ye lose not hold of this Divine defence.
Be not afraid. Contemners of the gods
Shall pay their quittance at the appointed hour.

CHO. Father, I quake with fear. The swift-winged bark
Arrives. The time of respite runneth short.
I am terrified. What profits my rough flight—
My wildered course by sea and land? My sire,
I faint with dread.

Dan. The Argive men's resolve
Was firm. They will fight in your behalf.
Fear not, my daughters, for I know that well.
Cho. Abandoned are Aegyptus' maniac brood,
Insatiate still of war. Thou know'st 'tis true.
In that firm-timbered black-eyed bark they came
Rowed by dark throngs of warriors and impelled
With loathing rage.
Dan. But they shall find on sho[illegible]
Full many to resist, whose arms are tanned
To tough endurance in the midday heat.
Cho. Nay, leave me not alone, I entreat [illegible]
[illegible].
A woman by herself is nothing-worth.
Strengthless for battle,—and the men that come
Are crafty-hearted, crafty-souled, impure
And impious as the ravens, that regards
No beach nor altar.
Dan. Then the gods [illegible]
No less than thou,—that maketh us, my daug[illegible]
Cho. No reverence for the blessed gods, no[illegible]
Even of your tridents, will daunt them, father,
Or make them hold their hands from seizing [illegible]
Madly intent are they with godless fury
Fevered with insolence, spurning Heaven,
Like dogs for boldness.
Dan. But men say wolves [illegible]
Are mightier. Wheat-born [illegible]
Cho. The wildest beast hath not such tem[illegible]
Of impious nature as these [illegible] men.
Beware!
Dan. Not swiftly speeds the marshalling
Of troops from shipboard. And ere that [illegible]
Returns to moor, and bring ashore in [illegible]
The hawsers, for security [illegible]
Takes time; nor all at once are men assured
Who tend a vessel by a [illegible] strand
That anchors will not drag, nor [illegible]
Least when the shore they find a harbourless
And nightward wends the westering sun. [illegible]

Still genders pangs in the wise pilot's breast.
Their army cannot well even disembark
Until their ship, safe-moored, in comfort rides.
Fear, if ye must, but lean on heavenly succour.
. . . . till I
Succeed in bringing help. Though I be old,
No ineffective summoner this town
Shall find me. For discourse I am lusty and young.
[*Exit*

CHORUS.

Mother of mountains, Earth, divinely great, I 1
Hath the Apian land a cave to cover me?
Some dark recess, whereunto we may flee?
Would I might change my state
To coal-black smoke, neighbouring the clouds on high,
Or spiring dust, that wingless I might fly,
Vanishing like an arrow in the sky,

And there might perish! The men's passionate mind I 2
Advances unavoidably. We quail
At our sire's tidings:—our dark spirits fail!
Ah! would that we might find
Some hanging noose to give us violent death
Ere tainted with contaminating breath!
Ere then, may Hades rule our spirits beneath!

O for a seat on some ethereal height, II 1
Where snow congeals from clouds that wandering float,
Or some smooth crag, forsaken by the goat,
Lone-thoughted, overhanging, far from sight,
The vulture's perch, to witness my deep fall,
Escaping from this wedlock's hated thrall!

Dogs, and wild birds that wing the region there II 2
Might take us for their unresisting spoil;
For death sets free from lamentable coil
Of cureless evils. Death prevents despair.
Death before marriage be my lot! No road
Frees me, but one straight path, to Death's abode.

Still genders pangs in the wise pil
Their army cannot well even dis·
Until their ship, safe-moored, in c
Fear, if ye must, but lean on

. . . .

Succeed in bringing help. Though
No ineffective summoner this town
Shall find me. For discourse I am

CHORUS.

Mother of mountains, Earth, divin
Hath the Apian land a cave to
Some dark recess, whereunto we r
Would I might change my state
To coal-black smoke, neighbouring
Or spiring dust, that wingless I m
Vanishing like an arrow in the sk

And there might perish! The
mind
Advances unavoidably. We quail
At our sire's tidings:—our dark
Ah! would that we might find
Some hanging noose to give us viol
Ere tainted with contaminating breat
Ere then, may Hades rule our spirits

O for a seat on some ethereal heigh
Where snow congeals from clouds that
Or some smooth crag, forsaken by
Lone-thoughted, overhanging, far f
The vulture's perch, to witness my
Escaping from this wedlock's hated

Dogs, and wild birds that wing the
Might take us for their unresisting
For death sets free from lamentable
Of cureless evils. Death prevents de
Death before marriage be my lot!
Frees me, but one straight path, to D

Then lift your wailing voices high, III 1
And let your prayers assail the sky.
The power that brings my fated end
Alone can free me or befriend.
Great Father, let thy righteous glance
Visit the proudly armed advance
Of violence thou hatest sore.
View their unblest battalions o'er,
And have regard to us who pray
To thee, whose rule all lands obey.

O Zeus, the intolerable pride III 2
Of that male offspring wrest aside!
Aegyptus' sons, arrived from far,
Hound me with noise of wanton war.
With violent hands they seek to clutch,
And taint us with unnatural touch.
But over all our human ways
The beam of thy great balance sways.
What mortal business without thee
Attains assured finality?

Ah! ah!
The snatcher comes, the shipmate of the men.
He stalks along the strand
To take me from the land
Even as his lords have planned—
Kidnapping snatcher, thou shalt weary ere then!
Sa! Sa! Even so! Again
I raise my doleful strain;
Seeing the forceful prelude close at hand,
Commencement of their violence and my pain.
O wala wa!
Fly to the refuge, fly!
Their looks of barbarous pride
At sea were hard to abide;
They fright us now on shore.
Thy shelter we implore,
Lord of this sanctuary!

Enter HERALD.

HER. Hark to my warning, hark!
Betake you to the bark
With all your swiftest speed.
Else comes the ruthless deed,
Hair pulled out by the root,
Branding of hand and foot,
Much blood in slaughter shed
And severing of the head.
If curses aught ye heed,
Speed to the galley, speed!

CHO. O would that in the briny flood I 1
Thou and thy lords of impious mood,
And that proud ship with timbers strong
Had foundered the mad waves among!
HER. Down to the vessel lies
Your pathway: then be wise—
Give heed to force, and leave
Rash counsels that deceive;
Forsake those seats and come!
The bark shall bear you home.
This Heaven-observing town
Smiles, as we seize our own.

CHO. No! Nevermore let me behold I 2
Those fertile waters, loved of old,
That save the labour of the steer,
And nourish life, to mortals dear,
Through rich supply of genial food,
Filling their veins with bounding blood!

. . . .

HER. Full powers to command you are mine.
From that pedestalled shrine
Come away; ye shall soon be afloat,
Will you, nill you, embarked in my boat.
Each one I will forcibly hale
By the folds of her veil,
Evicted with violent hand
From your seats in this land.

Cho. O would that thou with thy design　II 1
Might perish in the weltering brine,
All wildly by the wandering breeze
Wafted adrift o'er spacious seas,
To where the shoaling currents are
That chafe the Sarpedonian bar!
  Her. Howl as thou wilt, and rend thy robes, and call
Thy gods to aid! Thou shalt not overskip
The limiting bulwark of Aegyptus' bark.
Ay, howl and cry, out-wailing thy distress;
Thou hast thy name conjoined with wretchedness.

Cho. Too loud thine insults, child of Nile,　II 2
Swart monster, biped crocodile!
Yawning with terrors manifold,
With serried jaws agape and bold!
May He that reared thee turn aside
And bring to nought thy ruthless pride!
  Her. Speed to yon twy-prowed bark, I bid you, speed!
Else, if ye loiter, any one of you,
Reverence defied, I'll drag you by the hair.

Cho. Father, the help of sanctuary proves naught,　III 1
Vain our fond trust; he drags us all the same,
That stalking spider, that dark hideous dream.
Woe is me! O mother Earth, attend our cry;
Bid back our fear! Zeus, sire, Earth's son, O hear!
  Her. I fear not any gods that hold this ground—
They nursed me not, nor led me on to age.

CHO. Lords of the land, I am overpowered. Come near!

HER. Lords of your life full many shall ye soon
Behold, Aegyptus' sons. Not lordless ye!

CHO. We are undone, O king! Our hopes are gone.

HER. I'll pluck you off by the long locks and drag you,
Since ye are dull in hearkening to my words.

Re-enter KING PELASGUS.

KING. Sirrah! what dost thou? What imports the pride
Thou show'st in scorning this Pelasgian land?
Dost thou suppose we have nought but women here?
Flout'st thou Hellenes with thy barbarous tongue?
Much folly and no judgement, sure, is thine.

HER. Tell me wherein I have erred against the right?

KING. Thou knowest not how a stranger should behave.

HER. A stranger, who hath found what he had lost?

KING. To what power here didst thou prefer thy claim?

H. To Hermes, mightiest patron of such quest.

KING. He is a god, and thou profanest the gods.

HER. Nile, and the gods of Nile, are those I worship.

KING. Thou set'st at nought the gods of Argos, then.

HER. If any rescue, well! If not, I take them.

KING. Withdraw thy hand, else quickly shalt thou rue.

HER. Small courtesy lives in the words I hear.

KING. I yield not courteous terms to sacrilege.

HER. Aegyptus' sons shall learn it from my mouth.

KING. I take no charge of what they learn from thee.

HER. Yet let me know, that I may tell more clearly,
As it beseems a herald should report
Each fact in full. What must I say? By whom
Robbed of this band of female cousinship
Do I return? 'Tis Ares will decide
This cause, not heard in court, nor shall a bribe

Take up the quarrel, but, or ere it close,
Full many a warlike corpse shall stain the sod,
And many a life be reft in agony.

KING. Why tell my name to thee? Thyself in time,
And those companions of thy voyage, shall learn it.
These maidens, if with pious argument
Thou gain'st their hearty kind consent, thou mayest
Freely take with thee. Such was the decree
Singly determined by the popular voice
Of our whole city—nevermore to yield
This female band to violent attempt.
That plank hath been nailed home, and will not start.
Not graven on tablets was this law, nor sealed
Within papyrus-rolls, but in plain speech
Delivered to thee from a dauntless tongue.
Hear it, and vanish quickly from our sight.

HER. In those few words thou hast proclaimed a war.
May the men's cause prevail triumphantly!

KING. Men you shall find our land's inhabiters,
And men that drink not wine from barley brewed.

[*Exit* HERALD

Ye, maidens, with your maiden escort, pass,
And fear not, to our well-fenced citadel,
Deeply ensconced in well-appointed walls.
Wherein are many dwellings for my folk,
And mine are large, built with no niggard hand.
There you may find fair chambers, well prepared,
To share with fellow-lodgers: or ye may,
For this may seem more gracious, dwell apart,
In single rooms. Cull therefore, at your choice,
Whate'er is best, or most delights your souls.
I and my citizens, whose voice herein
This act hath ratified, protect you now.
What more assured protection would ye crave?

CHO. Peer of the gods, Pelasgian king,
May thy good deeds blest fortune bring!
Yet kindly hitherward convey
Danaüs our sire, without dismay;
Since on his prudence we rely
To appoint our dwelling, and espy

Where we may live with auspice good,
Amidst a gentle neighbourhood.
May all be ordered for the best!
Slander soon strikes the far-come guest.
(*To the female attendants.*) Ye then, dear maids, in comely wise,
Shunning sharp tongues and curious eyes,
Follow our steps in order due,
Taking the place appointed you
By Danaüs, when for dower he gave
Each daughter an attendant slave.

Enter DANAÜS

DAN. Children, acknowledge your preservers here.
Ye owe to the Argives, as to gods in heaven,
Rich drink-offerings, and prayer and sacrifice;
Your saviours without controversy are they.
With hearts incensed against the men, your kin,
They heard me tell of their unkindliness,
And granted me this escort of armed men
For honour and defence, a priceless gift,
Lest unawares I might be slain, and bring
A long-abiding burden on their soil.
Respect me then the more, since I have won
This favour through persuasive friendliness.
And take to heart one more admonishment
And precept of your sire, that time may prove
Their mind, whom yet this city doth not know.
Against an alien every tongue is swift
For mischief,—easy 'tis to blight with words.
Take heed, then, how ye soil my new-found honours:
Such beauty as yours provokes the gaze of men.
Fruit tender-ripe is hard to keep in safety—
Man covets it, how not? and bird of the air;
And crawling creatures waste and ravage it.
Cypris proclaims the mellowing grape too soon,
Bidding Love wait not, since the sap hath risen;
And on fair maidens, fresh and delicate,
Each passer-by darts forth the searching shaft
Of longing glances,—conquered by desire.

Let not this mar the plan for which we have toiled
So hard, and with our bark ploughed leagues of sea,
Nor let us reap disgrace, and please my foes.
For habitation, we have choice twofold—
Pelasgus' offer, and the citizens',
Exempt from charge. Take ye no thought for that,
But keep strict watch o'er this, your sire's behest,—
More than for life have care for modesty.

LEADER OF CHO. For other speed I trust the lords of heaven.
But for our vintage, fear not, O my sire!
Unless the gods have some strange work on hand
My heart shall hold its path unswervingly.

CHORUS.

Hail with blessings as ye move
All the gods this town who love!
Hail, great lords, that guard this land,
Ye that dwell along the strand
Erasinus from of old
With his stream divine doth hold.
Servant-maids, take up the strain;
Praise no more the alluvial plain
Nourished by the mouths of Nile,
Where ye harboured otherwhile,
But Pelasgus' city bless
With bright hymns of thankfulness.

Praise the streams, who at their will
This fair land with plenty fill,
Making brilliant life abound
Over all the teeming ground.
Artemis, behold us now;
Bend this way thy virgin brow;
Have compassion on our band
Moving through the stranger land.
Let not forced wedlock come,
Cypris' unrelenting doom:
Hard were such a lot to bear!
Spare us, Cytherea, spare!

Half-Ch. Yet we scorn not Cypris' power, II 1
Glory waits her sanctioned hour;
Next to Zeus, with Hera, she
Owns divinest majesty.
Through her subtle wiles possessing
Dignity, with marriage-blessing.
Hope and longing wait upon her,
Soft desires and thoughts of honour,
And the god whom none deny,
Mild Persuasion's witchery.
Nor doth Cypris ere refuse
Praise to each harmonious muse;
Numbers that melodious move
Suit the whispering paths of Love.

Half-Ch. But my helpless exiled lot, II 2
And the war that comes unsought,
Bid me shrink from Slander's breath,
And appalling sights of death.
Wherefore was their swift pursuing
Safely sped for mine undoing?
Half-Ch. What is fated, that shall be;
Zeus' inscrutable decree.
His vast mind's stupendous plan,
Ne'er shall be o'erpassed by man.
Even the end we deprecate,—
Should that marriage prove our fate,—
Often, since the world was human,
Hath o'ertaken many a woman.

1st Half-Ch. Zeus defend we should be wed III 1
To Aegyptus' hateful breed!
2nd Half-Ch. Happy 'twere to avoid that hour,
But can prayers entreat His power?
1st Half-Ch. Nay, thou know'st not. We have said.

2nd Half-Ch. Never could my feeble skill III 2
Sound the abysses of His will.
Boast not, then, beyond thy bound.
1st Half-Ch. Give me counsel clear and sound.
2nd Half-Ch. Let the gods their plan fulfil.

1st Half-Ch. Sovereign Zeus, prevent the stroke, IV 1
Leave us not to bear that yoke,
Married to the men we hate,—
Thou that freed'st from her sad fate,
When she suffered overmuch,
Io, with that healing touch,
That with kindly force Divine,
Founded our ancestral line.

2nd Half-Ch. To weak women lend thy might, IV 2
Let decision crown the right.
Not for happiness we pray,
But redemption from dismay,—
Least of threatening woes is still
Better than the worst of ill.
To the Gods we look for aid,
Let us be no more afraid.

THE PERSIANS

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA

CHORUS *of Persian Elders.*
ATOSSA.
Messenger.
Ghost of Darius.
XERXES.

The SCENE is laid at Susa, before the palace of Xerxes.

TIME—after the battle of Salamis.

The poet, in order to read the lesson of the Persian War, carries his Athenian audience into the heart of Persia, and bids them imagine the grief and consternation which must have reigned there after the destruction of the royal fleet. The play was produced in 472 B.C.

The Elders, the coevals of Darius, express anxiety for the fate of the great armament, whose splendour in going forth they describe.

Atossa, the widowed consort of Darius and mother of Xerxes, then enters, and confides to them the fears occasioned by her dream. They are trying to comfort her when the Messenger arrives, and at once reports the whole extent of the calamity. He gives a full and clear description of the battle and the retreat. Atossa is soul-stricken, and the Elders mourn. But presently the Queen returns, and with offerings and incantations they raise the spirit of Darius. He reproves the rashness and impiety of Xerxes, and prophesies of the defeat at Plataea. Then he vanishes, and the Chorus celebrate the glories of his reign.

Xerxes now arrives, and the tragedy concludes with the mutual lamentations of the King and of his aged counsellors.

The lessons indirectly inculcated are the dangers of impiety and the blessings of constitutional freedom.

Aeschylus was himself at Salamis, according to Pausanias, and his brother Ameinias certainly took a prominent part in the engagement. The poet's account is therefore, in this instance, to be preferred to that of the historian Herodotus, which is difficult to reconcile with it at all points. See an essay on the subject by Professor Goodwin, published in the *Transactions of the Archaeological Institute of America*, vol. i. pp. 236-262.

THE PERSIANS

CHORUS.

When the countless Persian host
Left for Hellas' distant coast
We remained, a faithful band,
Set to guard the sacred land —
Old, and therefore counted meet
Watchmen of this ancient seat,
To protect the hearths and homes
Round the ancestral golden domes.
Xerxes' self, Dar[illegible]
King and lord [illegible] forth each one.
Now my [illegible] within
Darkly musing doth begin
For our [illegible] return.
With his gilded host to yearn
All the youth of Asia born
Long have left her weak and lorn.
With a voice of piteous tone
Cries she for her strong ones gone.
Not to this our citadel
Runs or rides a man to tell
Of the souls of precious worth
Who from Susa's walls went forth.
And Ecbatana's proud lord
And the Cissian fortress old.
Horsemen [illegible] and the thro[illegible]
That on [illegible] armies strong
Haught Amistres' dignity.
Artaphernes' chivalry
Megabates high in power
Bright Astaspes, Persia's flower
Kings that host were marshalling
Vassals of the mighty king.

Ordering troops in countless flow,—
Masters of the twanging bow,
Masters of the bounding steed,
Dauntless hearts of glorious breed;
Dreadful in their bright array,
Dreadful in the hurtling fray:
Artembares of the car,
Stout Masistres, glad in war,
Staunch Imaeus, archer good,
There with Pharandaces stood,
And Sosthanes, without peer
As a lusty charioteer.
Mighty Nile's life-gendering coast
Furnished others for that host,—
Susiscanes' self for one,
And the Delta's true-born son
Pegastágon; then the power
Of old Memphis' governour,
Tall Arsames; Ariomard,
Holy Thebè's reverend guard:
Myriad oarmen from the mere,
Strong to row and skilled to steer.
Then the Lydian multitude
Who the seaboard towns subdued,
And on all that clime doth give,
Delicately nurtured, live.
Joint commanders marshal these,
Arcteus and Metrógathes.
Sardis from her stores of gold
Sped those numbers manifold,
Mounted men and chariots bright
With their steeds, a perilous sight,
Well appointed for the war,
Four or six to every car.
Sacred Tmolus' neighbouring folk
Threaten Hellas with the yoke;
Tharybis and Mardon lead,
Anvils both, to endure at need.
Mysian lancers next come on;
Gold-renownèd Babylon

Marshals then her mingled train,
Shipmen from the Indian main.
And the dauntless tribes whose pride
On strong bows hath still relied.
Last, from every Asian land
Troop the *dagger-bearing* band,
With a dreadful summoning
Gathered by the mighty king.—
Persia's flower of youth is flown,
Asia mourns her nurslings gone,
Longing wives and parents dear
Count the lingering hours with fear.

r the firth and away I 1
the opposite neighbouring shore
t conquering host and their leader have passed in
royal array.
the deep by the daughter of Athamas once ferried
o'er;
hath bridged the sea-ways with a close-framed flax-
bound floor,
d the neck of the prancing brine hath felt his
yoke.

r the monarch his mandate spoke, I 2
d innumerous Asia's lord
ives over the face of the wondering world his [illegible]
flock,
er lands and seas in their ordered myriads [illegible]
r the aid of his war-proof leaders, who ne'er broke
word,
at obey their awful sovereign, of race divine.

ith arms unnumbered, and ships [illegible] endless
line, [illegible]
ith the basilisk's murdering glance in his [illegible]
eyes,
urging the furious course of his [illegible]
le [illegible] on the spear famed [illegible]
nd the shaft-shower's [illegible]

What man is of power, what army of strength or size, II 2
To stem that torrent, or bar the invincible wave?
What strong sea-wall shall hinder its onward course?
Nay, Persia's gatherèd host hath resistless force,
And her people's hearts are brave.

By a god erewhile on the Persian this task was sent, III 1
In stress of the battle with uttermost hardiment
To destroy fenced cities, and hurtle with chariots, and carry away
Whole nations captive at once in the joy of the fray.

And they know, while the fierce winds rave on the whitening deep, III 2
To look on the forest of billows, and steadily sweep
O'er the wide sea-paths, as they trust to the whistling cordage small
And the man-bearing slender strength of the timber-wall.

Yet, if a god deceive, IV 1
What mortal man may 'scape by timeliest care?
Whose foot so fleet his freedom then to achieve,
Or to overleap that snare?

With flattering smiles at first IV 2
The feigning Fury trains the infatuate wight
To toils remediless of folly accurst
And long reprieveless night.

My gloom-o'ermantled heart is pricked with fear, V 1
Ah, well-a-day! lest the army be destroyed,
And Susa's spacious town shall sadly hear
Her streets of Persian men henceforth are void.

Then echoing her complaint the Cissian height— V 2
'Ah, well-a-day!' shall cry with shrill lament,
Crowds of lone women gathering in affright,
With woful noise of linen garments rent.

For over the bridge-like mole VI
Binding Asia to Europe, the whole great host
Are gone, every valiant soul;
Horseman, and footman, and charioteer,
Like a swarm of bees with their leader, their myriac crossed,
They have crossed, and left us here.

Grief fills the bereavèd bed VI
Where the bitterly longed-for husband comes no mor
Each wife hath her trouble instead;
Pining, she utters her anxious moan,
While each doth her Persian warrior with wifelike tears deplore
As she bears her burden alone.

Then in this room of ancient state
Sit, Persians, and in grave debate
Weave we deep counsel for this need,
To know how fares Dareius' seed,
Xerxes our lord, whose royal race
Is shared by all within this place:
Whether the host whose shafts o'erwhelm
Or they who bear the spear and helm
Have mastery in that far-off fight,
And oversway the opposèd might.
But lo, where light of equal worth
To glances from God's eyes comes forth,
Our empress-mother; kneel we here,
And bid her hail, with loyal fear.

Enter Atossa.

Princess, best of Persian women of the deeply folde zone,
Hail, our Xerxes' reverend mother, whom Dareiu called his own!
Bedmate of a god of Persians; mother of their go even now,
If the Genius of our Empire frown not with distempered brow.

ATOSSA. Even for that I came among you, from the rooms adorned with gold,
And the couch where with Dareius I was wont to rest of old.
Pangs of care are in my bosom; frankly will I tell you, friends,
Thoughts whereon tormenting terror for my dearest hope attends,
Lest the downfall of great riches ventured on a perilous road
Overturn the wealth Dareius gathered with the help of God.
Whence a twofold thought unspoken floats before my brooding soul:
Never let me reverence riches where no strong men keep control.
Nor be it mine where riches are not to light up the lowly cot,—
If but I may choose my fortune,—where some poor man bears his lot.
Wealth is ours in full contentment; yet we fear the fall of night;
For the presence of its master is the palace' only light.
Wherefore, faithful Persian elders, be my counsellors in this,
Since, relying on your counsel, I can never act amiss.

CHO. Empress-lady, know full surely, loyal is the aid you seek;
Never task, that we have power for, shalt thou twice have cause to speak.

AT. I am nightly visited with haunting dreams,
E'er since my son levied that host and went
To sack the towns of the Iāŏnes.
But last night's dream was far more clear than any.
I saw two women, fairly attired, the first
In flowing Persian robes; in Dorian garb
The other;—on they came, of stature tall,
Beyond the measure of humanity,
Faultless in beauty, sisters of one stock.
But for their native dwelling-place, methought,

The one had Grecian land allotted her,
The other, Barbarous. Now, in my dream,
I saw them fall to quarrel, and my son
Perceived it, and would tame and pacify
Their anger; he would yoke them to his car
And place his collar on their necks. Whereat
The one showed pride in such accoutrement,
With docile paces curbing to the rein.
But the other plunged, and with rebellious force
Wrecked the fine chariot-gear, and tore away
From all control, sundering the equal yoke.
My son fell headlong, and Dareius stood
Beside and pitied him—whom Xerxes seeing
Began to rend his garments in my dream.
Such were my visions of the night But when
I had risen and dipped my hands in the pure
fount,
I drew towards the altar, bringing there
Such tribute as the bane-averting powers
Delight in—honey-cake and frankincense.
Then at the hearth of Phœbus I beheld
An eagle taking sanctuary,—O friends,
My heart stood still with terror,—for a hawk
With double speed rushed after, and with wing
And talon ruffled him; he all the while
Cowering and submitting Dreadful sight!
Dreadful the tale, for you that hear! For know,
My son succeeding shall be more extolled,
But failing, no man here may censure him:—
Sovran no less, if he return alive.

CHO. Words of counsel, reverend mother, neither to affright thy heart
Nor to hearten thee unduly, would we speak. Even as thou art,
Go and pray the gods to extinguish aught that thou hast seen of ill,
But if aught of good thou dreamedst, beg them amply to fulfil
For thyself and seed that vision, and your friends and the Empire all;

Then to Earth and Souls departed pour forth wine, and kindly call
On Dareius, late thy husband, whom thou saw'st at dead of night;
Bid him send on thee and Xerxes blessing from beneath to light.
But whate'er opposed to blessing by thy dream was signified,
Quenched with ineffectual darkness let deep Earth for ever hide.
From a loyal heart this counsel flows in rapt prophetic vein.
Yet we augur from thy vision nought but blessing in the main.

AT. Surely with a loyal meaning to myself and house and son,
Thus interpreting my vision, thou the auspice hast begun.
May fulfilment crown thy présage! I, within my chambers hid,
To the gods and loved ones vanished will perform what thou dost bid.
Yet one doubt, dear friends, resolve me. Tell me, Persians, if ye may,
Whereabout on Earth's wide bosom Athens lies, as travellers say.

CHO. Yonder, where our lord the Sun-god droops and dwindles, far away.

AT. Wherefore was my son desirous Athens 'neath his power to bring?

CHO. Hellas then in all her borders would be subject to the King.

AT. Say; keeps Athens at her bidding such a multitudinous host?

CHO. Such a host, whose valiant prowess Persia knows of to her cost.

AT. What besides their men of valour? Have they wealth enough in store?

CHO. Yea, a vein by nature treasured in their land, of silver ore.

AT. Is it strength to draw the arrow that exalts them thus in might?

CHO. Not the bow, but shielded armour, and the spear for standing fight.

AT. Say, what shepherd sways their numbers? who their army's king and lord?

CHO. They call no man lord or master, buckle under no man's word.

AT. Then they ne'er will stand the onset of a strange invading foe.

CHO. They destroyed Dareius' army, great in number, fair in show.

AT. Thought of terror for the parents of our warriors now away!

CHO. All the truth for good or evil thou wilt learn without delay.
For there comes a man whose running clearly proves his Persian breed,
And methinks some certain tidings travel on his foot of speed.

Enter MESSENGER.

MESSENGER. Imperial centre of vast Asia,
Land of the Persians, port and haven of wealth,
What plenitude of glory at one stroke
Is perished! Persia's flower is fallen and gone.
Ah me!
'Tis evil even to herald evil news.
Yet, Persians, I must open all your grief.
The whole of the Asian army is destroyed.

CHO. O bitterness! O *mischief dire and strange*! I 1
Flow, flow with tears, Persians! O cruel change!
MESS. All yonder is undone. Myself behold
The light of home and safety beyond hope.

CHO. Have I grown old to endure an age of woe? I 2
Too long I have lived. O sore, unlooked-for blow!
MESS. *Myself the eyewitness, from no hearsay talk,*
I can describe, Persians, what ills befell.

CHO. Woe! woe! woe! woe! In vain from the Asian coast II 1
Went forth erewhile the myriad-banded host,
With various aspect, various arms,
To ravage Hellas with alarms.
MESS. Bodies of warriors miserably slain
Crowd Salamis around, and choke her bays.

CHO. Woe! woe! woe! woe! To think that, crimson-dyed, II 2
The dear-loved limbs, tossed on the unfeeling tide,
From rock to jaggèd rock are borne
At random drifted, rudely torn!
MESS. Their bows availed not. By the crashing prows
Of Grecian ships that host was overcome.

CHO. Wail for that shout of dread III 1
O'er Persians vanquishèd—
The foemen's war-cry, fraught with utter woe.
Wail for the host, whose warriors all lie low.
MESS. Salamis! hateful sound to all who hear!
Athens! what memories that name recalls!

CHO. Athens! by foes abhorred! III 2
Clear memory doth record
How many a blameless wife she reft at once
Of noble warrior spouse and warrior sons.

AT. I am stunned to silence; for such weight of woe
Baffles expression, making question dumb.
Yet god-appointed griefs must be endured.
Speak then in order, though thy faltering tongue
May quail in the recital,—who survives,
And whom of our commanders must we mourn?
What warrior, gifted with the marshal's wand,
Hath fallen and left his post, defenceless now?
MESS. The king yet living sees the light of day.
AT. A light of blessing for my palace home;
Fair day-spring in mid-darkness! Tell me more.
MESS. But Artembáres, of ten thousand horse

Leader and lord, 'gainst the Silenian shore
Is driven and dashed, an unresisting hulk.
And tall Dadaces, his chief officer,
Leapt nimbly from the deck, smit with a spear.
Tenagon, true-born prince of Bactria,
Round Ajax' sea-washed isle keeps wandering
While all about that coast where doves abound,
rgestes, Arsames, Lilaeus [illegible]
utt the repellent earth. [illegible]
retens, and buckler-armed Pharnuchus [illegible]
ll three from out one selfsame vessel fell.
hrysan Matallus, marshal for the king
O'er thirty thousand swarthy cavalry,
Changing his Ethiop hue to crimson there,
Dyed his dark-shadowing beard full red in death.
The Magian Arabus, Bactrian Artabes
As corpses hold the hard and alien land.
Amphistreus, wielder of the toilsome spear,
The valiant Amistris, of [illegible]
And Mysian Seisames,—and Tharybis
Whom five times fifty stately ships obeyed,
Comeliest of Lyrna's sons, unseemly in death,
Poor hapless corse, low lies. Syennesis
Amidst his prowess perished gloriously
Commanding his Cilician army there—
None, while he lived, more troublous to the foe.
So much I have told thee of our leaders fallen,
But woes beyond report untold remain.
At. Alas, I have heard enough of [illegible]
All Persia bowed with shame laments her dead.
But yet renew thy speech, and tell me, friend,
What number of the Grecian fleet so great
Emboldened them to meet our Persian men
Thus front to front, and armed prow to prow?
Mess. For numbers, be assured, our Asian fleet
Lacked not pre-eminence. The Grecian that day
Had ten times thirty barges, whereof were ten
Renowned for swiftness. Xerxes, well I wot,
Led full a thousand,—and, of noted speed,
Two hundred sail and seven. From such account

Judge if we seemed unequal for that fight.
Some power unearthly swayed the balance there
To countervail advantage for our loss.
The gods themselves protect Athena's town.
At. Then Athens yet remains unsacked, unrazed?
Mess. Even unendangered while Athenians live.
At. Whence came the encounter of the navies? Tell.
Which gave the onset? Was't the Grecian fleet?
Or did my son in pride of strength begin?
Mess. From nothing mortal, from some angry god,
Came the beginning of that course of woe.
A man of Hellas, from the Athenian host,
Came and told Xerxes thy great son this tale:
'Let but the shades of gloomy Night come o'er,
The Hellenes will not bide, but, each his way,
Manning the benches with a rush, will seek
By covert flight to save themselves alive.'
Xerxes, on hearing it, perceiving not
The envy of Heaven, nor the Greek man's guile,
Forthwith to all his admirals gave command
That when the sun had ceased to burn the ground
With ardent beams, and darkness occupied
The aetherial realm, our navy's main should then
In triple line watch o'er the passages
Of exit from the strait, while other ships
All round the isle of Aias should keep guard;
And if the Greeks escaped from death and doom,
Finding some secret outlet for their fleet,
The captains all should lose their heads.
So spake he
With lusty cheer, knowing nought of what should be,
Nor what the gods had purposed. Duly then
Obeying their lord, while supper was prepared,
They tied their oars to the rowlocks.—Daylight died
And night came on. Each oarsman held his oar,
Each armèd warrior manned his post on deck,
And rank to rank passed on the heartening word
From stern to stem o' the war-ship. Under weigh
Each vessel held the course appointed her,
Whilst all the captains kept their mariners

Manœuvring all night long, a moving chain.
The night was passing, and no sign was seen
Of Grecian vessel bound for stealthy flight.
But when fair day with milk-white steeds appeared
And covered all the land with gladdening rays,
hen rose from that Greek armament a song
oth loud and musical, and the island rocks
e-echoed, shouting battle. On our side
'ell disappointment, wonder and dismay,
hattering the general hope. Not as for flight
'ealed forth the Hellenes that high Paean-hymn,
But with good courage rallying to the fray.
All yonder side blazed with the trumpet's blare.
Then with one impulse, at the pilot's word,
All oars were dipped and smote the seething brine,
And swiftly their whole battle hove in view.
Their right wing in good order led the way,
Then all their navy followed; then one heard
A cry that grew: 'Sons of Hellenes, on!
Save Hellas, save your children, save your wives,
Your fathers' graves, the temples of their gods,
From slavery! Fight, to defend your all!'
Then from a sea of Persian voices roared
The counter clamour. For the hour was come.
Now ship smote ship with brazen-pointed prow.
A Greek began that onslaught, tearing off
All the ornature from a Sidonian hull.
Then on and on, with ships for spears, they fought.
The Persian fleet, in a perpetual stream,
At first appeared invincible; but when
Their numbers in the narrows packed and hemmed
Grew dense, they cracked their oarage in the crowd,
And smote each other with their beaks of brass,
And none might help his fellow. Ware of this,
The Grecian shipmasters with cunning skill
Justled us round and round,—till hulls capsized,
And all the sea was hidden from our sight,
With wrecks and human carnage covered o'er.
The cliffs and jutting reefs were thronged with dead,
And every vessel left in the Asian fleet

Rowed hard for safety in disordered rout.
But they, like men who have tunnies in the net,
With fragments of snapped oars, splinters of wreck,
Smote, hacked and slew, that all that reach of sea
With wailing cries and shouts of triumphing
Resounded, till work-baffling night came down.
Ten days on end would not suffice to tell,
In ceaseless talk, the whole account of woe.
Let this suffice thee; never heretofore
Died in one day so vast a number of men.

At. Woe, woe! What floods of sorrow are unbound
For Persia, and the whole Barbarian world!

Mess. Know thou, the grief of griefs is yet to come.
Such dire calamity befell them there,
That more than twice outweighed what hath been told.

At. What chance could be more dire than that we have heard?
Declare, what onslaught of calamity
Came on the host, transcending all that woe?

Mess. What Persian men were there of noblest strain,
For birth and valour of spirit most approved,
Foremost in constant service to the king,
Most cruel deaths ingloriously have died.

At. O loss *ineffable*! O cruel blow!
How mean'st thou these have perished? By what doom?

Mess. In front of Salamis an island lies,
Small, rough for moorage, which dance-loving Pan
Haunts with light hoof, roving the seaward ground.
There planted Xerxes that choice band, that when
The broken foemen on that island shore
Sought refuge, they might take the helpless prey
And kill them, rescuing from the narrow seas
What friends might drift there.

Badly he foresaw
Futurity. For when the God had given
To Greece the glory of that fight, forthwith
In the afternoon, before the sun was low,
They cased them in their armour, and leapt forth

From shipboard, and encircled all that isle.
Our nobles knew not where to turn. Then came
The crashing stones from stalwart hands, then flew
The life-destroying arrow from the string.
Last, in one roaring flood from every side
They rushed and closed them round with havoc dire,
smote and hewed them limb from limb, until
e princely lives, to a man, were all extinct.
es beheld and groaned, o'erwhelmed with woe.
at was his commanding all the host,
fty mound near to the open sea.
nce, with loud cries, and rending of his robes,
rose in sudden haste, and passed the word
the land army to retreat: then rushed
headlong flight.—Such dire calamity
ide the former calls for thy lament.
T. O sullen Fortune! How deceitfully
u hast robbed the Persians of their purposes!
his unending sorrow hath my son
sued his vengeance on the Athenians' pride!
o few of ours did Marathon consume,
r whom my son planning the recompense,
th brought this tumult of disasters down.
But tell us of the remnant of the fleet,
here didst thou leave them? Canst thou certify?
MESS. The captains of what ships remained afloat
alled down the wind in rash disordered flight.
Meantime the escaping army suffered loss,
ome perishing of thirst by the clear wells
n wide Boeotia, while the rest of us,
Hungry and scant of breath, passed on within
Phocis and Doris and the Melian shore,
Where mild Spercheius laves a smiling land.
From thence the borders of Achaia's plain
And towns of Thessaly received our host,
Hardly bested and hungering: there most died,
Of thirst and famine. Both were in the extreme.
Yet moved we onward through Magnesian wastes
To Macedonia, crossing Axius' fords,
And passing Bolbe's waving reeds; then came

To Mount Pangaion and the Edonians' land.
That night, against the season of the year,
By Providence Divine a wintry storm
Made hard with ice the Strymon's holy stream.
That men who erst had set the gods at nought
Bowed down and worshipped, praising Earth and
Heaven.
When those loud prayers were ended, all the host
Began to cross the ice-encrusted ford.
But only those who started ere the sun
Had shed abroad his beams remain alive.
For the bright orb with radiant warmth dissolved
And sundered the mid passage: down they fell,
Heaped on each other: he was fortunate
Who in that throng first yielded up his breath.
Not many are they who 'scaped, and with much toil
Hardly have passed through Thracia to a land
Where friendly hearths received them. Persia mourns
The loss of all that youth, her dearest flower.
All this is true, and more I leave unsaid
That Heaven sent down, afflicting Persian men.

CHO. Genius of ruin! with what giant force
Thou hast set thy foot on all this Persian world!

AT. Woe, for the host destroyed! oh, woe is me!
Night vision of my dream, too clear and true
Thy warning! Weak interpreters were ye!
Yet your one word of counsel firmly holds,
And I embrace it, first entreating Heaven
With humble prayers. Then will I fetch from home
For Earth and parted souls an offering,—
Too late, I know, when all is over and done,
Yet with some hope of lessening ills to be.
Meantime 'tis yours, in this disastrous hour,
With loyal plans thwarting disloyalty,
To unite in conference all faithful men.
And should my son arrive ere my return,
With words of comfort guide him home, lest he
Add wilful evil to calamity. [*Exit*

CHORUS.

[G]reat king of all gods, thou hast ruined the Persians' pride;
[T]hou hast drained their army that flowed in a lordly tide;
[T]hou hast covered all over with grief, as a darksome shroud,
[E]cbatana's towers and Susa's palaces proud.
[A]nd many a tender hand is rending the veil,
[A]nd many a gentle spirit doth inly wail,
[A]s beneath the tear-steeped bosom the heart doth fail.
[A]h! many a Persian bride in the lonely house
[C]ries 'Oh!' for the vanished face of her manly spouse.
[I]n delicate sorrow they leave the coverlets fine
[A]nd the couches of youth's soft dalliance, while each doth pine
With sound unending of inexhaustible moan.
And we with loyal spirits lament and groan
For the heart-overwhelming fate of the warriors gone.

Now all dispeopled and alone. I 1
In all her coasts doth Asia groan.
Alas, woe worth the day!
At Xerxes' word that army crossed,
By Xerxes was that army lost,
Xerxes for all that naval host
The advantage cast away.
How Susa's children shall deplore
Dareius, their desire of yore,
Defending them from harm!
Oft then they triumphed with the bow,
But nought of loss did Persia know,
Secure from all alarm.

Bold mariners and men of war I 2
On many a flax-winged, dark prowed car,
(Woe worth the bitter hour!)

By ships o'er sea that army crossed,
On shipboard all their hopes were lost,
By ships together hurtling tossed,
And fell Ionians' power.
Our sovereign lord himself, we are told,
Through trackless wastes and wintry cold
Escaped pursuing death,
But hardly: Thracia's plains are wide,
And till he reach the Asian side
He draws precarious breath.

Others perforce left to their earlier doom, II 1
Round the Cenchrean shore
Float to and fro, swayed in their wintry tomb.
Lament them o'er and o'er!
Let poignant grief inspire the long-drawn moan,
And nought but sobs impede the heart-derivèd groan.

Tost by the terrible waves, they are pulled and torn II 2
By voiceless mouths—oh, weep!—
[illegible]f monstrous uncouth creatures, strangely born
Of the unpolluted deep.
[illegible] mourn their masters lost, and parents old
[illegible] their childless lot with agonies manifold.

Through Asian land the subject folk III 1
Prepare them to cast off the yoke;
Tribute no longer will they pay
Beneath the Persian's sovran sway,
No longer fall in homage prone
Before the Achaemenian throne:—
The awe of majesty is gone.

Men's tongues henceforth are free to rang[illegible]
O'er possibilities of change.
The curb of licence is no more:
The government of force is o'er;
Since Aias' surf-surrounded land
Holds on her blood-bestainèd strand
All Persia's mystery of command.

Re-enter ATOSSA.

AT. Friends, whosoe'er hath skill of mortal ways
Knows, when the tide of evils is at flood,
How all things terrify; but when the life
Flows smoothly, men are confident and sure
The same fair fortune will be theirs for aye.
My lot this while is put about with dread.
Heaven's adverse will is plain before my sight;
Mine ears are filled with clamourous cries;
And all my spirit is amazed with woe.
Therefore I come on foot, without my car
And all that former pomp, again from home,
Bearing unto the father of my son
Peace-offerings of power to charm the dead:
Milk rich and white from a pure cow, bright honey
Wrought out of flowers by the industrious bee,
With lustral waters from a virgin stream,
And living juice from an ingrafted vine,
Its ancient mother, bright with glistening sheen.
I have also from the grey-green olive-plant,
That carries her thick foliage ever young,
This fragrant oil; and wreaths of various flowers,
Luxuriant offspring of all-bounteous Earth.
Ye, then, dear friends, in honour of the dead
Support mine offering with your pious hymn,
And summon up from underground to light,
Dareius, now a blessed spirit of good,
Whilst I commend unto the thirsty ground
These honours destined for the powers below.

CHORUS.

Most royal lady, revered of the Persians all,
While thou send'st down to his dwelling beneath the ground
That pure libation, we with a hymn will call
On the powers that conduct the soul o'er the darkling bound
To be kind, and release the spirit they hold in thrall,
Hermes, and Earth, and King of the Powers of Night,

Great holy beings that govern the world below,
Send up, we pray you, his soul from beneath to light;
For a cure of our troublous evil, if cure he know,
He alone can tell us in words of revealing might.—

Doth the sainted spirit hear us of our royal lord? I 1
Hath he caught the clear-toned word
From our voices pealing Persian-wise in varied notes of woe?
Is my prayer by him allowed?
Or mine anguish must I utter in a strain exceeding loud?
Hath he heard my supplication there below?

Earth, and rulers of the people of the shadowy place, I 2
Send him upward, we implore,
Like to none that in past ages Persian earth has covered o'er,
Persia's God, of Achaemenian race.

Loved was the hero, loved his mound of rest, II 1
Beloved and mourned the life it hides from day.
Hades, release of thy great grace, we pray,
Divine Dareius, of all rulers best!

He lost not lives in wars by millions rued, II 2
But heavenly wise the Persians found him still;
Since with deep wisdom and unwavering will
He steered our armies, like a pilot good.

Master and lord, appear! Our lord of old, III 1
Rise by the summit of thy mound of rest,
Lifting thy saffron slipper, edged with gold,
Rearing thy turban, with the imperial crest;
Come, father, ancient source of blessings manifold!

Come, list the woes of this strange hour of doom! III 2
Lord of our lord, let us behold thy form!
There hovers o'er our hearts an evil gloom.
Our youth are perished in a withering storm.
Father of good, come forth; we kneel before thy tomb!

O woe, woe, woe! IV
Twofold the blame, redoubled is the blow.
Thou whom thy friends must ever freshly mourn,
Why hast thou left thine Empire thus forlorn?
Those three-tiered galleys all are gone,
Undone, for evermore undone!

The Ghost of DAREIUS *appears.*

DAR. O true and tried, corrivals of my youth,
Old now and reverend, Persians, what hath chanced?
What grief afflicts the state? Why groans the plain
With shuddering tramp of crowds in agony?
My soul was softened by the drink offering,
Yet fears, when I behold beside my tomb
My queen and you, that sing your dirges near,
And sadly summon me from where ye stand
With ghost-compelling anthems. Hard the road
From Hades forth to light; the gods beneath
Are swift to seize and tardy to let go.
Yet hath my power with them prevailed. I am here
But haste, lest I be censured for delay,
To tell what new-born trouble weighs you down.

CHO. We fear to address the spirit of the dead; I
We tremble to behold thine honoured head;
We are cowed and voiceless through long-wonted dread.
DAR. Nay, since your lament hath drawn me upward from my place of rest,
Be not awed, but clear and briefly let your trouble be expressed,
Nor prolong the tale unduly. Wherefore are ye sore distressed?

CHO. We shrink to obey that call; we shrink to tell 2
Things hard of utterance to one loved so well.
Love joined with grief our silence doth compel.
DAR. Then, since ye prove speechless, daunted by your long-accustomed fears,
Thou, partaker of my chamber, royal lady, bowed with years,

Tell me something plainly, ceasing from those deep-drawn sobs and cries.
Direst evil to frail mortals can but come in human guise.
If their life go lengthening onward, many griefs to mortals all,
Some from Earth and some from Ocean, are appointed to befall.

At. O Dareius, beyond all men blessèd in thy fortune's course,
Envied, while thou saw'st the sunlight, like a god with radiant force
Thou didst live a life of gladness, honoured to the tranquil close;
Now in death, 'mid Persia's downfall, envied is thy deep repose.
Few the words required to tell thee the full measure of our woe:—
All thine Empire lies in ruin, crushed with cureless overthrow.

Dar. Came some plague from the destroyer? Or hath faction torn the state?

At. All our army before Athens perished by the blows of Fate.

Dar. Say, what son of mine was leader of the host that ventured there?

At. Xerxes the impetuous, sweeping Asia of her children bare.

Dar. Was't by sea or land, infatuate! he devised that fond intent?

At. Earth and Ocean felt the presence of his two-fold armament.

Dar. How could that stupendous army pass to Europe on dry land?

At. Made to cross the firth of Hellè, by his engineers o'erspanned.

Dar. How prevailed he such a barrier on great Bosporos to lay?

At. Some unearthly power was working in his breast that fatal day.

DAR. Mighty was the power that swayed him, ma *the boldness of his thought!*

AT. Now the event reveals the mischief through hi pride for Persia wrought.

DAR. What event? What stroke hath moved you mourning for that host of kings?

AT. Ruin on the navy rushing ruin to the arm brings.

DAR. Have my warrior people perished with de struction so complete?

AT. Susa for her vanished heroes moans in ever vacant street

DAR. Out, alas for our defenders! for the army staunch array!

AT. *Bactria mourns her flower of manhood—not* head whose hair was grey.

DAR. Hapless king! Of what prime succour fee he now the bitter loss!

AT. All alone, or with few comrades, so they tel he came to cross—

DAR. Whither? Is there aught redeemed us fro the failure ye deplore?

AT. Gladly came he near the bridge-way yokin shore to hostile shore.

DAR. Passed he safely thence to Asia? Come the tidings true and clear?

AT. Yea, thereof report is certain, rumoured witho doubt or fear

DAR. Ah! *too soon the doom is fallen. Zeus ha* brought upon my child
All the weight foretold of evil. I to fate was reconcile
Thinking Heaven would bring the burden on an age far removed.
Now all otherwise, through Xerxes' rashness, hath th sequel proved.
When a man is bent on ruin, God will help him to h fall.
Now a fount of ill is opened for himself and Persians al
Since, in ignorant youth o'erweening, he would fett like a slave

Bosporos divinely flowing with his Hellespontine wave.
He would alter Heaven's appointment, and with chains from human hands
Sought to stay the stream eternal, paving for his countless bands
Ample roadway, he, a mortal, rashly thinking he could foil
All the gods and great Poseidon by his hammers' impious toil.
Sure his heart by Heaven was blinded, and the wealth my labour won
Lies a prey for the first comer, through the madness of my son.

At. This hath too impetuous Xerxes learnt from men of evil strain,
Ever at his ears recounting all the treasure thou didst gain
For thy house by foreign battles:—He, they whispered, within door
Craven-like his falchion brandished, adding nought to that fair store.
Such reproaches ofttimes hearing from the men of froward mind,
That campaign against fair Hellas and those levies he designed.

Dar. They have wrought a work, those counsellors, beyond
Imagination,—an indelible deed.
No such disaster ever heretofore
Dispeopled Susa, since the Lord of Heaven
O'er all the tribes of teeming Asia
Granted one man to wield the imperial sword.
Medus first ruled that shepherd host. His son
Confirmed the sovereignty, since with wise thought
He governed his own spirit. Cyrus then,
Third in succession, by his fortunate reign
Established peace through all the Persian name,
Brought in the Lydian and the Phrygian folk,
And sorely ravaged wide Ionia,—
Too righteous to provoke the gods to wrath.

Fourth ruled his son, Cambyses, great in war.
But Mardos, your fifth king, disgraced his land
And Persia's ancient palace. Him with guile
Brave Artaphernes in the chamber slew,
With his brave comrades, destined to that deed.
Then fell to me the lot I coveted,
And mighty hosts I led to fields of fame;
Yet brought on Persia no such misery.
But my son Xerxes, young in years and mood,
Remembers not his father's warning rede.
A dire forgetting! for of this be sure,
Friends of my youth, not all our royal line
Did harm to equal this that he hath done.

CHO. Say, Lord Dareius, what shall be the end?
How shall we Persians meet the time to come,
How make the best of fortune?

DAR. Nevermore
Wage wars on Hellas, though the Median host
Be thrice so many. For the country there
Fights for her sons.

CHO. How meanst thou that the land
Fights for her men?

DAR. The more assailants come
The more she kills by famine.

CHO. Then we'll raise
A chosen band of warriors able and few.

DAR. Not even the remnant that remains behin
To range through Hellas, shall return alive.

CHO. How? Doth not all that force of Eastern me
Pass Hellê's ford from Europe hitherward?

DAR. Few out of all that multitude—if aught
Of credence to Heaven's oracles be due
From him who, looking on to-day's event,
Sees their fulfilment absolute and clear.
For thus 'tis prophesied. Through idle hope
Xerxes will leave the choicest of his men
To winter where Asopus with cool rills
Waters the plain, giving Boeotia's land
A draught right welcome. What awaits them the
Vengeance condign for impious violence.

They came to Hellas, and were not afraid
To plunder shrines and burn the temples down.
No reverence held them;—altars laid in dust,
Statues uprooted from their pedestals,
All things divine o'erturned, attest their guilt.
Nor shall their punishment be less:—they suffer
Even now, and more shall suffer; still that fount
Is gushing, unexhausted, unexplored.
Plataea's plain shall prove it, pasted over
With blood of slaughter from the Spartan spear.
Three generations hence those heaps of slain
Voiceless shall blazon to posterity
Loud warnings against human pride. That flower
Soon falls, and yields calamity for fruit,
Unlooked-for harvest of dire misery.
Mark well the wages of their sin, and bear
Hellas and Athens ever in mind. Let none,
Raising his heart above the things he hath
In passionate love for plans unrealized,
Make shipwreck of great fortune. Zeus brings on
His inquisition at the destined hour,
A judge severe to punish boastful thoughts.
Then ye who may, supplying his chief need,
Spend your well-reasoned counsels on my son,
And bid him cease provoking Heaven with pride.
Dear agèd queen, mother of Xerxes, thou
Bring forth the seemliest raiment from thy store
And go to meet thy child. O'er all his frame
The broidered garments, rent in sorrow's rage,
Hang raggedly, showing the sundered woof.
Soothe him to mildness with consoling words:
No other voice but thine will he endure.
I pass to nether darkness. Agèd friends,
Though in affliction, give your hearts to joy,
And cheer your souls with comforts day by day,
Since wealth avails not in the world of death.

[*Ghost vanishes*

Cho. How many griefs, that are and are to be
For the Eastern race, afflict my hearkening mind!

At. Sorrows are thronging to my heart, but one

ouches me nearest,—oh, the cruel blow!—
erxes in rags,—all shame is in that word,
ll ruin, all despair, all misery!
will bring forth the costliest ornaments
nd go with them to meet and comfort him—
ll not forsake my loved one in his woe. [*Exit*

CHORUS.

h, glorious was the life of Persia then, I 1
Untold the blessedness her children found,
When the agèd, the all-conquering, the renowned
tainless Dareius, god like among men,
Repeller of all harms, ruled Asian ground.

ur armies' prowess then was famed afar, I 2
The strongholds of our foes were razed and burned,
And when the host with happy speed returned
'nworn and scathless from the field of war,
Each homestead welcomed all for whom it yearned.

How many a tribe Dareius erst subdued! II 1
Yet passed not westward over Halys' ford
'or stirred *from home*:—The Acheloian brood
f hamlets pight on spreading Strymon's flood
Hard by the huts of Thracia's warrior horde;

nd towns, with towers begirt, on the firm earth II 2
Beyond that pool, and *many on either side*
Vith spacious gardens fringing Hellè's firth
Obeyed his voice, and, far from pinching dearth,
Propontis' coves, and Pontus' opening wide;

nd the isles that,—where the shores of Asian
land III 1
With jutting cliffs o'erlook the broadening brine,—
urrounded still by surging billows stand,
As Lesbos, Samos rich in olive and vine,
Chios and Paros, Naxos, Myconos,
Tenos, with rustic Andros nestling close.

And those midway across, whose bright abodes III 2
Teem with sea-produce,—Lemnos, once the seat

Of wax-winged Icarus, Cnidos and Rhodes,
  And Cyprus,—with full many a fair retreat,
Paphos the blest, Soli, and Salamis,
Whose parent isle has brought our land to this:—

O grief! And those rich towns he governed then IV
  With Persian justice and wise Persian care,
Peopled with myriads of Hellenic men
  Throughout Ionia's province large and fair.
  Boundless resource for war was harboured there,
Of shielded spearmen and all manner of arms.
But now by Heaven's fell spite and naval harms
That hope is killed, never to live again.

Enter XERXES.

XER. Ay me.
All hapless for the hateful blow
That came ere I the signs might know
Of the dire rage of that harsh power
Minded to wither Persia's flower.
Our stock is blasted. Woe is me!
How shall I face my destiny?
When I behold yon reverend train,
Strength fails my limbs. My heart were fain,
O Zeus, that I were buried deep
With those who sleep the warrior's sleep.
  CHO. Woe, Xerxes, for that staunch array!
Woe, for the Persian's honoured sway!
Woe, for the men of chief renown,
By ruthless Destiny mown down!
Our country groans for the young life
She reared in vain, in Xerxes' strife
Destroyed, for he hath crammed the grave
With Persian bodies many and brave:
Many are gone, our country's bloom,
Darkly to dwell within the tomb.
Archers of might, a countless host,
Have perished;—their brave help is lost.
  Alas, the heavy hour!

sovereign lord, thine Asian land
nks on her knee, strengthless to stand,
Strangely bereft of power. I 1

XER. Alas! To the Achaemenian name,
, ill-starred mortal, born to shame,
Have caused nought else but loud lament,
With hatred from all Asia blent.
CHO. Like Mariandynian mourner, I
Greet thy returning with a cry
Of mourning, meditated well,
As to prolong some funeral knell

XER. Weep on. Let the harsh notes abound I 2
With endless, iterative sound
On me, on me, the destinies turn
Their rage, 'gainst me their ire doth burn.
CHO. I'll utter, then, the hopeless cry
Of a whole race in agony,
Such meed of mourning is their due
Whom war 'mid seething waters slew. II

XER. So wrought the Ionian's might,
Whom in that gloomy fight
Strong Ares made prevail
Their armèd prows with shocks
Drave on those hapless rocks
Our men, and turned the scale
CHO. Then, weeping, I would ask thee more,
Where are the chieftains we deplore,
Thy comrades? Where is Susas gone,
Where Pharandaces, Pelagon,
And Psammis? Where Agdabatas?
Where Susiscanes, Dotamas,
Leaving Ecbatana to moan?

XER. Fallen from a ship of Tyre
I left them, soon to expire
A prey to hopeless griefs,
Beating their helpless forms,
Playthings of ruthless storms,
On Salaminian reefs.

Cho. Again with tears I ask, where stood
Pharnuchus, Ariomardus good,
Princely Seualkes, form divine,
Lilaeus of the lordly line,
Masistras, Memphis, Tharybis,
Hystaechmas, Artembares;—this
I bid thee tell me, sovereign mine.

Xer. Ay me, ay me! III 1
Athena's ancient town
They saw, then plunged adown
With plashing not of the oar.
They saw her to their death,
Now, spent their latest breath,
They welter on that shore.
Cho. And him, too, didst thou there forsake,
Whose eye would still for Persia wake,
And reckon o'er at thy behest
Her millions? Him, of viziers best,
Alpistus good, Sesámes' child,
Grandson of Megabates mild?
And didst thou leave brave Parthus there?
And tall Arsámes? O despair!
Evil on evil, woe on woe,
To Persia's pride thy tale doth show.

Xer. As on the witch's wheel, III 2
Thy cruel words reveal
My comrades to mine eye.
Why must I see again
That scene of boundless pain?
My heart for them doth cry.
Cho. Not these alone mine eye demands;
For where are Xanthus and his bands,
Ten thousand Mardian warriors? where
Anchares, brave beyond compare,
Arsaces and Diaeeis, bold
Leaders of mounted troops untold?
Cegdabâtas', Lythimnas' truth,
Keen Tolmus' spear, I miss with ruth,

XER. Bitter indeed to us,
But gladsome for our foes.
CHO. Our prime of strength
Was there lopped off and crushed.
XER. Yea, all my train
Are torn from me.
CHO. Thy best of Persian friends
Failed thee through dire disasters of the deep.

XER. Drench sorrow with your tears. Conduct me home. VI 1
CHO. I am steeped with tears that well from sorrow's depth.
XER. Re-echo now my wailing.
CHO. With good will.
XER. Wail now in unison.
CHO. Ah me! ah me!
Full heavy is the weight of grief I bear,
And heavier that to come which I foresee.

XER. Strike now in time, and groan for my behoof. VI 2
CHO. Sad gift that sorrow gives to misery!
XER. Re-echo now my groaning.
CHO. Woe, woe, woe!
XER. Now lift the wailing cry.
CHO. Ah me! ah me!
And mingled with our wail shall come the stroke,
(Ah me, alas!) blackening the burdened breast.

XER. Beat now your breasts and raise the Mysian cry. VII 1
CHO. O grief, grief, grief!
XER. And ravage your white beards.
CHO. Ay, with clenched hand and sorrow-swollen heart.
XER. And lift your high-pitched tones.
CHO. I will, I will.

XER. Rend now with might the folds upon your breast. VII 2
CHO. O grief, grief, grief!

XER. Ply hand on hair for ruth.
CHO. Ay, with clenched hand and pity-laden heart.
XER. And let your tears run down.
CHO. They fall, they fall.

XER. Re-echo now my groaning. VIII
CHO. Woe, woe, woe!
XER. Lead home with lamentation.
CHO. Ah! alas!
XER. Unwelcome is my tread to Persian ground.
CHO. . . . .
XER. One cry holds all the city.
CHO. One loud cry.
XER. Wail, then, approaching softly.
CHO. Woe, ah! woe!
For those who perished with the three-tiered hulls!
XER. Ay me!
Reluctantly I tread on Persian ground.
CHO. I will conduct thee with sad mourning sound.

XER. Bitter indeed to us,
But gladsome for our foes.
CHO. Our prime of strength
Was there lopped off and crushed.
XER. Yea, all my train
Are torn from me.
CHO. Thy best of Persian friends
Failed thee through dire disasters of the deep.

XER. Drench sorrow with your tears. Conduct me home. VI 1
CHO. I am steeped with tears that well from sorrow's depth.
XER. Re-echo now my wailing.
CHO. With good will.
XER. Wail now in unison.
CHO. Ah me! ah me!
Full heavy is the weight of grief I bear,
And heavier that to come which I foresee.

XER. Strike now in time, and groan for my behoof. VI 2
CHO. Sad gift that sorrow gives to misery!
XER. Re-echo now my groaning.
CHO. Woe, woe, woe!
XER. Now lift the wailing cry.
CHO. Ah me! ah me!
And mingled with our wail shall come the stroke,
(Ah me, alas!) blackening the burdened breast.

XER. Beat now your breasts and raise the Mysian cry. VII 1
CHO. O grief, grief, grief!
XER. And ravage your white beards.
CHO. Ay, with clenched hand and sorrow-swollen heart.
XER. And lift your high-pitched tones.
CHO. I will, I will.

XER. Rend now with might the folds upon your breast. VII 2
CHO. O grief, grief, grief!

XER. Ply hand on hair for ruth.
CHO. Ay, with *clenched hand and pity-laden heart.*
XER. And let your tears run down.
CHO. They fall, they fall.

XER. Re-echo now my groaning. VIII
CHO. Woe, woe, woe!
XER. Lead home with lamentation.
CHO. Ah! alas!
XER. Unwelcome is my tread to Persian ground.
CHO. . . . .
XER. One cry holds all the city.
CHO. One loud cry.
XER. Wail, then, approaching softly.
CHO. Woe, ah! woe!
For those who perished with the three-tiered hulls!
XER. Ay me!
Reluctantly I tread on Persian ground.
CHO. I will conduct thee with sad mourning sound.

SEVEN AGAINST THEBES

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA

ETEOCLES.
Messenger.
CHORUS *of Theban Maidens.*
2nd Messenger.
ISMENE.
ANTIGONE.
Herald.

There were also some mute persons to represent the Theban Elders.

The SCENE is laid in the Cadmeia, or Citadel of Thebes, in an open space before the palace of the Labdacidae.

TIME—during the generation before the Trojan War.

This play, which was performed in 467 B.C., is known to have been the third play of a trilogy on the 'Tale of Thebes,' consisting of the *Laius*, the *Oedipus*, and the *Seven*, and having the *Sphinx* associated with it as a Satyric drama.

Although lyrical declamation and narrative have still a large place, this tragedy shows a decided advance on those preceding it, in the development of the action and in power of characterization.

Eteocles, the central figure, is nobly imagined. Knowing himself to be the victim of a cruel destiny, and fighting under the shadow of his father's curse, he presents a dauntless brow to the enmity of the skies, and acts with unabated heroism both as a patriot and as a warrior. Even in going forth to the unnatural encounter with his younger brother (Polynices, in Aeschylus, is still the younger), he bears himself with unimpeachable dignity. The trepidation of the Theban women forms the dramatic contrast to this terrible self-possession. The whole tragedy is well described by Aristophanes as *Ἄρεως μεστόν*, 'crammed full with the very spirit of war.'

Although the final drama of a trilogy, this ends, like the *Suppliants*, with divergent utterances on the part of the two halves of the Chorus, such as might have prepared the way for an *Antigone*. The art of Aeschylus retains something of the grandeur, and also of the indeterminateness, of Epic poetry.

The six leaders whom Polynices, with the aid of Adrastus of Argos, his brother-in-law, has succeeded in leaguing against his country are, (1) Tydeus, the Aetolian, who had also taken refuge with Adrastus; (2) Capaneus, the son-in-law, and (3) Eteoclus, the son of Iphis, late King of Argos; (4) Hippomedon, son of Talaus, an Argive; (5) Parthenopaeus, the Arcadian, son of Atalanta and Meilanion, (6) Amphiaraus, the prophet, who had been induced to take the fatal step, of which he foreknew the issue, by his treacherous wife Eriphyle, the sister of Adrastus. The lines in which his noble integrity are described are said to have been applied by the Athenian audience to Aristides.

SEVEN AGAINST THEBES

ETEOCLES.

CADMEIAN citizens, what man soe'er
Hath charge to wield aright the helm of state,
Must keep strict watch, nor once offend in word.
His eyelids may not slumber. If success
Be ours, 'Some god has done it.' If mishap,
Which Heaven forefend, should visit us, then I,
One man in many mouths, through all this town
Shall hear myself decried with hymns of hate
And fierce reverberate groans May Warder Zeus,
True to his name, ward such from Cadmus' town!
Meantime 'tis yours, according to your might,
Whether now in the prime age beseeming war,
Or of young limbs and tender, or in eld
Still nourishing strong nerves with vigorous blood,
To aid your city and your country's gods,—
Whose altars here are threatened with disgrace,—
And your own offspring, and your native land,
Mother and nurse, that, while in infancy
Ye crept about on her kind bosom, took
The burden of your nurture all on her,
And reared you up, her trusty shield-bearers,
To stead her in this day of her distress.
So far, the gods are with us. To this hour,
Beleaguered all this while, the chance of war,
With Heaven's consent, hath most inclined our way
Then rise to what ensues. For now the seer,
Shepherd of birds, who, in his ears and mind,
With art infallible discerns their flight,
Nor needs flame tokens,—he, Tiresias, saith—
By divination thus assured and clear—
To-night the Achaean host, in council met,

Are planning their main onset 'gainst our town.
Come, man the battlements, crowd every port,
Each to his post in panoply go forth.
Line well the ramparts, mount the flanking towers,
Meet them undaunted at the gates, nor fear
Their foreign numbers. God shall guide the event.
For my part I have sent my scouts to scan
Yond' host;—nor idly, if my faith be true.
Their sure report shall guard us from surprise.

Enter MESSENGER.

MESS. Dread Lord Eteocles, our people's king,
From yonder host I come with tidings clear,
Myself the eyewitness of the things I tell.
Seven goodly champions, chiefs of seven bands,
Shed blood of bulls in hollow dark-rimmed shield,
And dipped their fingers in the crimson gore,
And sware by all the powers of murdering war
Either to raze this city to the ground
And ravage Thebes with hostile violence,
Or stain our clime with carnage in their death.
Then fastened they around Adrastus' car
Mementos of themselves to travel home
Unto their parents,—wherewithal they wept.
But never sound of sorrow left their lips,
Since the high temper of their iron hearts
Aflame with valour, breathed the dauntless mood
Of lions glaring with intent of war.
Nor halt they to fulfil their oath. The lot
Was falling as I left them, that should 'point
Each chief the port whereon to march his men;
Wherefore, at every gateway's going forth,
Set thou with speed our city's noblest sons;
Since now at hand their host with spear and shield
Tramples the ground: on yonder plain are cast
White foam-like flakes from throats of armèd steeds.
Thou then, our pilot, make the bulwarks firm
Of this our vessel, ere the blast of war
Descend on her: full loudly yonder surge
Roars from the land. Seize thou the present hour,

While I shall keep, as heretofore, the glance
Of a true watchman, that intelligence
Of things without may shield thee well from harm.
[*Exit*

ETEOCLES. Zeus, Earth, ye guardian deities, and thou
Mightiest of all for ill, curse of my sire,
Extirpate not with ravage of the foe
My country, I entreat you, spare her fall!
Destroy not homes where Grecian voices sound.
Let Cadmus' town still live at liberty
From foreign domination, nor impose
On Thebes the yoke of bondage. Be her aid!
Methinks my prayer must suit with your own wills;
For countries fortunate give gods their due.

CHORUS (*entering*)

We cry aloud for fear. O day of woe!
They have left the camp. They are on their way.
The host
Is streaming hither, horsemen in the van,
A mounted multitude. The dust persuades me,
Seen in the sky, dumb harbinger, but sure.
The tramp of hoofs upon the nearer plain
Falls on mine ear, threatening captivity.
It hovers close at hand, the heightening roar
As of wild waters irresistible
Rending the hills. Ah gods! Ah goddess powers!
Avert the coming woe! With deafening shouts
They are rushing on to scale our city walls,
Armed all in white, armed for pursuit, for captu
Who shall defend us, who shall save? what god,
What goddess-power? Where shall I kneel and pr
Which shrine shall serve? O blessed ones, I ha
Your holy presences! 'Tis time, 'tis time
To cling to present gods. Why do we groan
And linger? Hear ye not the smitten shield?
When, if not now, should supplicating robes
And wreaths be in request? The sound is cle
Nay visible! the clash of many a spear!

War-god, that from of old inheritest
Our Theban earth, wilt thou betray her now?
What wilt thou do? Desert thine own? Bright god
Of the golden helm, look on the land, the town,
Long since thy well-belovèd. One and all,
God-guardians of our city, come, behold
This maiden-league against captivity!
Wild waves around the wall, borne on by blasts
Of Ares' breath, slant-crested waves of men,
Are flashing at the gate. Father of all,
Save us from capture; stay the enemy's hand!

Round Cadmus' citadel with dire alarms I 1
The Argive foemen close with terror of arms.
The curb-chains of their chargers as they ride
Ring knells of warriors clad in mailèd pride.
Seven valiant chiefs before them, spear in hand,
Each at the allotted gateway, take their stand.
O daughter of the Highest, lover of fight,
Pallas, defend our country with thy might,
And thou, Poseidon, ruler of the deep,
Let thy shark-spearing weapon through them sweep,
And free us from this tyranny of fear.

O Lord of war, deliver Cadmus' town, I 2
The city from of old declared thine own;
Let thy fond care for her to sight appear.
First mother of Cadmeians old and young,
Cypris, defend us all! From thee we are sprung,
Who now, with prayers that pierce the immortal ear,
Meekly surround thy sacred altars here.
O wolf-slaying lord, stirred by our groans and cries,
Send slaughter on our wolvish enemies!
Kind maiden, daughter of Latona, thou
Make ready for the fight thy silver bow.

Ah, ah! All round I hear the rattling car, II 1
(Hera, dread lady of the skies!)
The wheels about the burdened axles jar,
(Kind maiden, Artemis, arise!),

All the air is hurtling with their brandished spears.
Where stands our city's weal? What shall be done?
What issue of our fears
Will the everlasting gods bring on?

Ah, ah! they come! Slung stones are glancing o'er II 2
Our battlements (Apollo kind!)
Through every gate is heard the rising roar,
Borne inward on the troubled wind,
From myriad brazen shields beaten in scorn.
Yea, but of war the righteous last event
In highest Heaven is born,
And from great Zeus with saving power is sent.

O blessed Onka, that o'erlook'st our town,
Protect thy seven gated home's renown.

Divine defenders all, III 1
Come at our maiden call,
Warders sublime of Thebe's holy land,
Leave not in war's alarms
Your city to dire harms
Of cruel onslaught by an alien band;
But hear our cry: mark well the uplifted hand.

Keep watch around the gate, III 2
Save Thebes in her dire strait,
Kind powers that ever shield her from above!
Recall each hallowed rite
And aid in stress of fight
This people that have shown you faithful love:
Think of your altars, and our saviours prove!

ETEOCLES.

Tell me, ye creatures unendurable,
Is this the noblest course, the State's defence,
The rallying note for our beleaguered men,
That ye should fall before each public shrine,
With your shrill outcry, hated of the wise?
Neither in trouble nor kind prosperous days
Let me be housed with women! When they rule
Their boldness is the bane of peaceful life;

And once afraid, they bring worse misery
To home and country. Even as ye to-day,
Coursing with senseless hurry to and fro,
Set up a noise that genders heartless fear;
Whereby the foreigner's advantage grows,
And Thebes is ravaged inly by ourselves.
So fares the man whom women dwell withal.
Howbeit, what soul soe'er defies my sway,
Woman or man or neither, if so be,
The doom of ruin with fell purpose waits
To o'erwhelm them with dire stoning of the folk.
For business out of door let men have care,
And let not women be our counsellors;
Bide within doors, nor hinder us. Do ye hear?
Or do I prate all idly to deaf ears?

CHORUS.

Dear prince of Laius' line, my spirits sank I 1
To hear the rattling chariot, the harsh clank
Of nave on axle of the whirling wheel.
Hark, hark! the fire-forged steel
That rudder-like controls the hard-mouthed steed
Is jangling with his motion of dire speed.

ET. And when the ship is labouring in mid seas,
Say, doth the sailor fly from stem to stern,
So to find rescue from a watery death?

CHO. Firmly believing in the powers divine I 2
I hurried forward to each ancient shrine;
When round our gates the deadly hail-shower flew,
Nearer in prayer I drew
To the blest gods, driven by my fears, that they
Might shield our town with their immortal sway.

ET. Pray that these walls may fend the foeman's spear.

CHO. Yea, while the gods uphold them.

ET. Nay, the gods
Desert, 'tis said, the conquered country's domes.

CHO. Ne'er in my lifetime let yond' holy throng II 1
Desert my land, nor let me see the foe

Scouring these streets, quelling the bold and strong
In fiery overthrow!

ET. Temper with prudence your fond piety.
Obedience is the mother of success—
A helpful offspring. So tradition holds.

CHO. True—*but the strength of Heaven is over all,* II 2
And often out of depths of dire despair,
God lifts the hopeless after heaviest fall,
Though dark clouds choke the air.

ET. Leave it to men to render sacrifice
And *victims to the gods, when foemen strive,*
'Tis thine to keep indoors and hold thy peace.

CHO. Through gods we hold our city unsubdued, III 1
And these towers brave the tide of foemen rude.
What wrath can that call down?

ET. I grudge not the honour thou wouldst pay to Heaven;
But keep thy panic within bounds, nor move
Our men to cowardice. Therefore be calm.

CHO. Hearing the unwonted din, with fears distraught III 2
The topmost sanctuary I straightway sought—
Dread seat of blest renown.

ET. Now then, if ye be told that some are slain
Or wounded, catch not at the news with cries.
The War-god feeds him with the slaughter of men.

CHO. Lo, there! I hear the chargers neighing high!

ET. Then make not too apparent what ye hear.

CHO. The town's foundation groans! They close us round!

ET. Is't not enough I am taking thought for that?

CHO. Battering at gates grows loud! *I am full of dread!*

ET. Go to! speak nought of this for Thebes to hear.

CHO. O gathered powers, forsake not *our strong* wall!

ET. A plague on you! Be silent and endure.

CHO. Dear fellow-Theban gods! No bonds for me!

ET. You bring them on yourself and all the town.

CHO. Almighty Zeus, send lightning on our foes!
ET. O Zeus, in women what a race thou gavest
CHO. Wretched, as men are, in captivity.
ET. Again you cling to yonder shrines and cry.
CHO. My heart is weak; terror usurps my tongu
ET. Yet grant to my desire one light request.
CHO. Wouldst thou but name it! Let me hear an know.
ET. Cease talking, wretched one, fright not th friends.
CHO. I have done. With others I will bear m doom.
ET. That speech of thine I am better pleased witha
Besides, I bid you, standing well away
From the images, hope ever for the best,
Looking to Heaven for succour. Hear my vow,
And answer it with joyous voiceful hymn,
As wont is at Hellenic sacrifice,
Heartening to friends, dispersing hostile fear
I vow to all our land-sustaining gods,
Both of the plain, and the mid-market-place,
To Dircè's fountain and Ismenus' stream,
When all is well, and Thebè rests secure,
That we will stain with blood of bulls and sheep
The hearths and homes of the gods, and thereabov
Uprear our trophies, fastening to their walls,
With captive spears, the raiment of our foes
Festooned around their temples. Hereunto
Add ye your prayers and offerings, not with groa
Or vain repeating of wild babblement,
Seeing nought hereof will alter destiny.
I go to find six champions who, with me
For seventh, shall stand at our seven outward port
Ere hurried message and swift-rumoured news
Astound us with the blaze of utmost need. [*Ex*

CHORUS.

My reason yields, but soothes not these alarms. I
For anxious thoughts, close to my spirit's core,
Rekindle evermore

The flame of terror for these leaguering arms;
Even as some dove beside the serpent's lair
Broods all a-tremble o'er her nestlings there.
What shall be done? Our walls are strong;
Yet onward moves their countless throng,
A firm compacted ring!
While, cresting that tumultuous tide,
Their hurrying bands from every side
The deadly hand stone fling.
O Zeus-born powers, from heaven descend,
And Cadmus' children mightily defend!—

I 2

Say, to what land of warriors should ye go
Forsaking Thebè's plain of fertile soil,
And yielding to the foe
Dircè's dear fountain, to the sons of toil
Most nourishing of all the streams that flow
By gift of him whose waves enfold the earth,
Or that from sons of Tethys have their birth?
Then, guarding still this ancient town,
Win from our citizens renown,
Sending on yonder host
The homicidal power of flight
That guides nor shield nor spear aright,
But yields all arms for lost
Then 'mid loud praises shall ye stand
On lofty thrones, defenders of our land

II 1

'Twere full of pity, sure, to plunge in night
A land thus grey with time, the Achaians' prey
And spear-driven captive, in forlorn despite
Heaven-strewn with ashes in her evil day.—
To see dragged off to bondage by the hair,
As fillies by the mane, their garments fair
Being rent around them, maids and elder dames;
While all the city that escapes the flames
Is filled with outcry, ransacked and laid bare,
'Midst clamour of wild rapine, waste, despair,
Confusion!—I foresee with fear
The heavy hand of ruin hovering near.—

CHO. Almighty Zeus, send lightning on our foes!
ET. O Zeus, in women what a race thou gavest!
CHO. Wretched, as men are, in captivity.
ET. Again you cling to yonder shrines and cry.
CHO. My heart is weak; terror usurps my tongue.
ET. Yet grant to my desire one light request.
CHO. Wouldst thou but name it! Let me hear and know.
ET. Cease talking, wretched one, fright not thy friends.
CHO. I have done. With others I will bear my doom.
ET. That speech of thine I am better pleased withal.
Besides, I bid you, standing well away
From the images, hope ever for the best,
Looking to Heaven for succour. Hear my vow,
And answer it with joyous voiceful hymn,
As wont is at Hellenic sacrifice,
Heartening to friends, dispersing hostile fear
I vow to all our land-sustaining gods,
Both of the plain, and the mid-market-place,
To Dircè's fountain and Ismenus' stream,
When all is well, and Thebè rests secure,
That we will stain with blood of bulls and sheep
The hearths and homes of the gods, and thereabove
Uprear our trophies, fastening to their walls,
With captive spears, the raiment of our foes
Festooned around their temples. Hereunto
Add ye your prayers and offerings, not with groans
Or vain repeating of wild babblement,
Seeing nought hereof will alter destiny.
I go to find six champions who, with me
For seventh, shall stand at our seven outward ports;
Ere hurried message and swift-rumoured news
Astound us with the blaze of utmost need. [*Exit*

CHORUS.

My reason yields, but soothes not these alarms. I 1
For anxious thoughts, close to my spirit's core,
Rekindle evermore

For him they look to close their eyes in night
And free them from wild weeping and affright.

LEADER OF CHORUS. Dear maids, methinks the scout from the army brings
New tidings for our ears. His nimble feet
Run as on wheels, urged by his eager will.
And lo! the prince himself, of Laius' line,
Comes fittingly to take the man's report.
He, too, moves eagerly with steps of haste.

MESS. With perfect knowledge I will tell thee now
The purpose of the foe, which port by lot
Each chief assails.—Tydeus already shouts
To assault the Proetan gate, but the wise sec
Forbids to cross the Ismenus, for the signs
Are adverse. Tydeus, mad with battle thirst,
A noon-day dragon, screams, reviling sore
The prophet Amphiaraus, Oicles' son,
With taunts of cowardice, as tendering life
Too dearly; thus he roars, and proudly wave
The triply-shadowing plume of his bright helm
Beneath his buckler bells of brazen tone
Clang terror, and it bears this haughty sign—
A heaven ablaze with stars, cunningly wroug
While beaming on mid shield the orbed moor
Eye of the night, queen among stars, appear
Thus rampant in his over-daring arms
Shouts on the river brink this lover of war,
Like fiery steed that pants upon the bit
And strains to start, hearing the trumpet sou
What adversary, when the Proetan gate
Is opened, wilt thou trust to oppose him the

ET. I blench at no man's array, I fear no
From emblems: plumes and bells without th
Hurt not. Nay, more. This night whereof thou
Portrayed upon his shield with heavenly sign
May hold a mystic meaning rightly weighed.
If night shall fall upon his eyes in death,
This proud device will designate aright
The destined downfall of the shield bea

Whose insolent thought thus prophesies his end.
For adversary to defend the gate
I will appoint the son of Astacus,
Melanippus here, a man of noble strain,
One who reveres the throne of modesty,
And hates high-vaunting words; of bearing still
And quiet, save where honour stirs him on;
Sprung from that remnant whom the War-god spared
Of the earth-born seed,—a true son of the soil.
The powers of war shall rule the event; but he
By law of kindred predetermined stands
From his own mother to repel the foe.

CHO. Gods, grant our warrior good success! He goes
A rightful champion to withstand our foes.
Trembling I look, lest precious lives be spent
For precious lives in bootless hardiment.

MESS. Well may he prosper with the help of Heaven!
The Electran gate hath fallen to Capaneus,
A Titan form yet taller than the first,
Whose threatful vaunt surpasses human pride.
Fortune forbid the accomplishment: He swears,
God willing or not willing, he will scale
The wall and sack the city, though from Heaven
Dread Discord stalk the plain to beat him back.
Zeus' thunderbolts and lightning he compares
To beams of summer noon-day. For a sign
He bears a man unarmed with lighted brand
For single weapon, whose announcement runs
In golden letters, 'I WILL BURN YOUR TOWN.'
What adversary shall cope with one so bold
Or bide undaunted such a challenger?

ET. This blazon, too, breeds profit for our cause,
Since of vain thoughts men's tongues accusing them
Fail not of judgement. Capaneus is loud
In threats which he will wreak in scorn of Heaven.
Through foolish transport his incautious tongue
With mortal vehemence hurls against the sky
Big billowy words to offend the supreme ear.

But I am confident the flash will come
Of righteous vengeance to transpierce his pride,
Armed with a flame in no wise comparable
To Helios' noontide warmth. Yet, man to man,
He, too, though proud, shall find his opposite,
Burning with valour, Polyphontes fierce,
Well warranted for wardship, by the grace
Of Artemis, with other powers to aid.
Now tell us of another challenger
Standing for Argos at a different port.

Cho. Perish the man who vaunts his impious force I 2
Against our town! May Heaven arrest his course
With lightning, ere his over mastering power
Have torn my life from the protecting bower!

Mess. I'll tell thee who stands next to assault a gate.
The third lot from the upturned brazen helm
Leapt for Eteoclus, whom Fortune bids
Assail the port Neistan with his troop.
Thither he wheels his chargers, snorting loud
With eagerness to dash against the gate.
Their nozzle pipes, in savage fashion filled
With boastful breath, give forth a shrilly sound;
And on his shield no mean device is shown —
A warrior, armed, climbs up a ladder set
Against a tower manned by his enemies,
As bound to carry it by storm, and cries
(Here too the legend is distinct and clear),
'Not Ares' self shall throw me from the wall!'
To oppose him, too, send one well warranted
To ward from Thebes the yoke of servitude.

Et. I would send him without fail, but by good hap
He is passed already forth, great Creon's son
Megareus, of th' earthborn seed, who shall not yield
His station at the gate for any steed's
Wild snortings, but will either die and pay
The boon land for his nurture, or will take
Two armours and the city on the shield
For his own prize to adorn his father's hall.

Whose insolent thought thus prophesies his end.
For adversary to defend the gate
I will appoint the son of Astacus,
Melanippus here, a man of noble strain,
One who reveres the throne of modesty,
And hates high-vaunting words; of bearing still
And quiet, save where honour stirs him on;
Sprung from that remnant whom the War-god spared
Of the earth-born seed,—a true son of the soil.
The powers of war shall rule the event; but he
By law of kindred predetermined stands
From his own mother to repel the foe.

Cho. Gods, grant our warrior good success! He goes
A rightful champion to withstand our foes.
Trembling I look, lest precious lives be spent
For precious lives in bootless hardiment.

Mess. Well may he prosper with the help of Heaven!
The Electran gate hath fallen to Capaneus,
A Titan form yet taller than the first,
Whose threatful vaunt surpasses human pride.
Fortune forbid the accomplishment: He swears,
God willing or not willing, he will scale
The wall and sack the city, though from Heaven
Dread Discord stalk the plain to beat him back.
Zeus' thunderbolts and lightning he compares
To beams of summer noon-day. For a sign
He bears a man unarmed with lighted brand
For single weapon, whose announcement runs
In golden letters, 'I WILL BURN YOUR TOWN.'
What adversary shall cope with one so bold
Or bide undaunted such a challenger?

Et. This blazon, too, breeds profit for our cause,
Since of vain thoughts men's tongues accusing them
Fail not of judgement. Capaneus is loud
In threats which he will wreak in scorn of Heaven.
Through foolish transport his incautious tongue
With mortal vehemence hurls against the sky
Big billowy words to offend the supreme ear.

But I am confident the flash will come
Of righteous vengeance to transpierce his pride,
Armed with a flame in no wise comparable
To Helios' noontide warmth. Yet, man to man,
He, too, though proud, shall find his opposite,
Burning with valour, *Polyphontes* fierce,
Well warranted for wardship, by the grace
Of *Artemis*, with other powers to aid.
Now tell us of another challenger
Standing for Argos at a different port.

CHO. Perish the man who vaunts his impious force I 2
Against our town! May Heaven arrest his course
With lightning, ere his over-mastering power
Have torn my life from the protecting bower!

MESS. I'll tell thee who stands next to assault a gate.
The third lot from the upturned brazen helm
Leapt for *Eteoclus*, whom Fortune bids
Assail the port Neistan with his troop
Thither he wheels his chargers, snorting loud
With eagerness to dash against the gate
Their nozzle-pipes, in savage fashion filled
With boastful breath, give forth a shrilly sound;
And on his shield no mean device is shown.—
A warrior, armed, climbs up a ladder set
Against a tower manned by his enemies,
As bound to carry it by storm, and cries
(Here too the legend is distinct and clear),
'NOT ARES' SELF SHALL THROW ME FROM THE WALL!'
To oppose him, too, send one well warranted
To ward from Thebes the yoke of servitude.

ET. I would send him without fail, but by good hap
He is passed already forth, great Creon's son
Megareus, of th' earthborn seed, who shall not yield
His station at the gate for any steed's
Wild snortings, but will either die and pay
The boon land for his nurture, or will take
Two armours and the city on the shield
For his own prize to adorn his father's hall.

He bears no blazon but his own right arm.
Brag now—and stint not—the next challenger.

CHO. May fortune speed thee ('tis my fervent prayer) II 1
O champion of our homes; ill may they fare
Who vaunt high words against our city's peace!
According to their madness of intent
May wrathful Zeus look down in punishment
And cause their pride to cease.

MESS. Fourth challenger, with noisy vehemence,
At the gate neighbouring Pallas Onka, stands
The portly stature of Hippómĕdon.—
I will e'en confess I shuddered as he whirled
That disk so vast, I mean his orbèd shield.
No commonplace engraver framed the sign
On that circumference. 'Tis Typhon, pouring
Through fiery jaws black smoke—to flickering flame
Own sister. And about the hollow womb
Of that firm orb are fixed, as on a ground,
Twined wreaths of serpents. He himself moreover,
Shouted, as with the War-god's spirit possessed.
He raves for conflict with fear-striking glance
As of a Bacchanal. Such foe's assault
Calls for much care in the defence. Already
Menace of rout is rife at yonder gate.

ET. First, Pallas Onka shall defend her own,
Hating the man's insensate arrogance.
She dwells beside our city at that gate,
To guard her brood as from the serpent's tooth.
Then for a man to meet him, Oenops' son,
Valiant Hyperbius hath been chosen, a man
Willing to know Fate's pleasure in the event:—
In form and spirit, as in panoply,
Flawless. The lottery's chance by Hermes' skill
Hath matched them not amiss. The men are foes,
And hostile each to each the gods they'll bear
Grappling together on their shields: the one
Typhon, flame-breathing, whilst Hyperbius
Hath father Zeus for blazon, seated firm,

In act of onset, lightning-bolt in hand.
And no man yet hath seen Zeus overcome.
Such benefit of aid divine have we:—
Victorious powers for us; vanquished for them.
Whence one may argue that the men opposed
May likewise fare:—Zeus is a combatant
Of valour more than Typhon, and shall save
Hyperbius with the blazoned lightning there.

Cho. I firmly hope the warrior who doth wield II 2
The rebel monster's form upon his shield—
The foe of Zeus that gods and mortals hate,
The loveless earthborn power whom one and all,
Divine and human, execrate,—shall fall
Head-first before the gate.

Mess. Even so may it prove! And now the fifth
I name,
Appointed to the fifth, the northward port,
Hard by Zeus-born Amphion's holy tomb.
He by the spear he wields, which he doth worship
Beyond all gods, prizing it more than sight,
Swears he will sack Thebê by force of war.
Such vow, such prayer is his, the fair-faced man
Of boyish mien, the mountain mother's pride.
The downy growth of genial youthful bloom
Peers freshly on his cheek, but lush and full.
With spirit unlike his maiden sounding name,
With ruthless heart and flashing glance, he comes.
Nor without blazon stands he at your gate,
Since on the brass-forged rounded shield he throws
Before his goodly person, he displays
Thebê's reproach, the live-devouring Sphinx,
Riveted on, a bright embossed device,
Beneath whose figure a Cadmeian man
Is so disposed that of all shafts i' the fight
Most shall be hurled at him. This hero moves
As minded to deal wholesale with his foes,
Nor bring disgrace on his long journeying
From far Arcadia, whence to Argolis
Parthenopaeus came; a sojourner

Who means to pay his debt of maintenance
By wreaking on these towers such menace huge
As I pray Heaven the gods may render void.
  Et. Ay, let the gods but visit their intents
With like for like; they and their impious vaunts
Shall utterly be quenched in misery.
For your Arcadian, he too hath his match:
A man not given to boasting, but whose arm
Fails not at need; brother of him last named,
Actor. No deedless tongue, how bold soe'er,
Shall by his leave rush in to vex our town
With evil menace; nor will he permit
The man who bears upon his hostile shield
That hateful ravening plague, to enter here,
But she without shall wrangle with the chief
Who brings her Thebes-ward, since beneath these walls
She is battered so unsparingly. May Heaven
But grant my bold vaticination true!

  Cho. My bosom thrills, pierced through with words of fear: III 1
My plaited hair starts upright, when I hear
The high-voiced vauntings of that impious band.
May Heaven destroy them yonder in our land!

  Mess. I come to the sixth challenger, a man
Of perfect temperance, most brave in war,
The valiant prophet Amphiaräüs: he,
Embattled at the Homoloïan gate,
Breaks forth on Tydeus with reproaches loud
And manifold: 'Author of many deaths,
Mover of Argos unto evil ways,
The fury's summoner, grim slaughter's page,
Adrastus' counsellor in all this ill;'
Then calling on thy brother, glancing back
On your sire's awful fate, naming the son
In the end twice o'er,—'Polynices, fraught with strife,'—
He thus denounces him: 'A goodly deed,
Admired of Heaven, well-fitting to be told
And heard by times to come, to sack and burn

One's native town, profaning all the gods
Of one's own race, ruining hearth and home
With rash invasion of an alien league!
What right may countervail a mother's claim,
Or dry that well-spring? How then shall the land
Whence thou art sprung, made captive by thy will,
E'er be thy friend to fight for thee?—'Tis mine
To enrich this soil, a prophet underground
Within the border of my foes. Then, on!
I hail the battle, hoping for an end
Not void of honour.' Thus the prophet cried,
And reared his shield of massy bronze. No sign
Blazed on that orb, for 'tis his firm intent
Not to seem noblest, but to be; so reaping
Rich harvest of deep-furrowed thoughtfulness
That brings forth fruit of counsel wise and true.
Send, then, to labour at the opposing oar,
Men of tried skill and trust. The righteous man
Who fears the blessed gods, is to be feared.
  Et. Woe worth the auspice of the day that joins
The righteous with the worst of evil men!
That grain hath no ingathering. The tilth
Of madness brings forth death. Either at sea,
Embarked with hot-brained sailors bent on crime,
The pious perisheth with that fell crew
Abhorred of Heaven; or, loving righteousness,
But dwelling in a city of bad men
Forgetful of the gods, inhospitable,
He is caught in the same toils of vengeful doom,
And, by the universal scourge o'ertaken,
Is quelled. Even so this prophet, Oecles' son,
Just, faithful, temperate, pious and brave,
Potent with inspiration, being conjoined
Maugre his judgement with their impious threats
Who lead from far this onslaught on our land,
Shall with them be o'erwhelmed by the act of Heaven!
Yet hardly can I think he will come near
To assail the gate,—not through faint-heartedness,
But knowing he must die in that assault,
Or else make void the word of Loxias,

Who speaks not save in season. Ne'er the less
We will appoint his match, tall Lasthenes,
A gate-keeper not kind to comers-in,
One old in wisdom though of youthful frame,
An eye of nimble range, a hand not slow
To wrest the spear uncovered of the shield.
Howbeit, good fortune is the gift of Heaven.

CHO. Hearken, ye gods, to our most rightful prayer! III 2
Grant that our city nobly still may fare;
Against the invader turn the troublous fight,
Heaven-smitten beyond the barriers, in our sight!

MESS. Seventh by lot to the seventh gate assigned
Is thine own brother. Listen, while I tell
What issue he desires, what cause he invokes:
Either to set his foot upon your wall
Proclaimed your city's lord, and, with a shout
Of triumph in her capture, there to meet
With thee in conflict, slay thee, and be slain
Together; or, both living, be revenged,
Banishing thee his banisher, even so
As thou didst outrage kinship on his head.
So Polynices cries, and in his rage
Bids all the gods of his own land and race
Visit his prayer with full accomplishment.
His new-wrought buckler, lightly swayed, hath on it
A twofold token, to the purpose framed;
A man of beaten gold, in panoply,
As 'twould appear, is led by a fair dame
Full modestly attired, whose legend runs,
In letters all of gold,—'JUSTICE AM I!
AND I WILL RE-ESTABLISH IN HIS RIGHT
THIS WARRIOR HERE; HE SHALL RETURN AND RULE
HIS NATIVE CITY AND HIS FATHER'S HOUSE.'
I tell thee their devices; 'tis for thee
To judge whom thou wilt send:—mine to report;
And thou shalt find all my reporting true:—
Thine to be Thebè's pilot in the storm.

ET. O Heaven-infatuate, God-abandoned!

O race of Oedipus, our race, ill-starred!
Woe's me, my father's curse even now comes
true.
Yet ill would it beseem me here to weep;
Lest tears give birth to heavier cause of woe.
But for this man of strife, for Polynices,
Soon shall be known the end of that device,
If the gold writing on his shield emblazed,
And blatant with wild hopes, shall bring him home.
Had Justice, virgin daughter of the Highest,
Truly attended him in thought and deed,
This might have been. But never upon him,
Neither in issuing from the darkling womb,
Nor in the dawn and springtime of his youth,
Nor when the manly growth upon his chin
Was gathering, hath great Justice looked and smiled.
Nor in his native country's sore distress
May I believe she'll stand by him to-day.
Unjustly would she bear the honoured name
Of Justice, to consort with that rash mind.
Whereon relying, I will go forth and stand
Myself to oppose him:—who more fit than I?
Commander with commander, foe with foe,
Brother with brother, I will conflict. Bring forth
My greaves, to fend the sling-stone and the spear!
Cho. Dear son of Oedipus, let not thy mood
Be like to his of the ill-omened name!
Enough that Argive and Cadmeian come
To the issue: blood so shed hath power to cleanse.
But death of brothers, each by a brother's hand,—
That were a stain no time could purify.
Et. If ill must come, let honour be secure;
No other gain accrues to men when dead.
The craven dastard hath no glory in death.

Cho. Dear prince, what wouldst thou do? Let not
the force I 1
Of this war-fever rule thy headlong course,
But quench this fatal longing at the source.
Et. Since Heaven this consummation hastens on,

Let Laius' seed, caught by Cocytus' flood,
Drift down the tide, victims of Phoebus' ire.

Cho. Too sharply urgeth thee the savage sting I 2
Of strong desire unto thy home to bring
Dire harvest of unlawful blood-shedding.
Et. Cruelly near in kin, my father's curse,
Close on fulfilment, with dry tearless look
Tells of things more desired than death's delay.

Cho. Yet haste not thou, but win both life and fame! II 1
No taint of cowardice shall touch thy name.
The Erinys-storm shall leave thy home and land
When Heaven hath free-will offerings from thy hand.
Et. Heaven hath forgotten us, or with blank stare
Wonders at sacrifice from men fore-doomed.
Why fawn on Fate when in the grips of Death?

Cho. Nay, seize the time that offers; Heaven, though late, II 2
May veer and alter; even the blast of Fate,
That now against thy peace blows fierce and rude,
May change hereafter to some milder mood.
Et. Fate rages, for the curse of Oedipus
Is come to ripeness, and the visioned dream,
Parting our patrimony, was too true.

Cho. Let women rule thee, though thou rail'st on them.
Et. Speak, then, to purpose and be brief.
Cho. Go not
On this emprise to guard the seventh gate.
Et. I am too sharp set for words to blunt mine edge.
Cho. Heaven favours victory though won by fear.
Et. A maxim not for warriors to approve!
Cho. And wilt thou reap the life of thine own brother?
Et. God willing, he shall not escape his doom.
[*Exit*

CHORUS.

I am shuddering with sad fear I 1
Of the ruin hovering near,
Lest the power of godless might
Alien from the lords of light,
Seer infallible of ill,
Dark Erinys, should fulfil
Oedipus' infatuate vows
'Gainst the children of his house.
Still she holds her destined path
Prompted by a father's wrath:
Now this child-destroying strife
Lends her purpose instant life.

Ruthless Iron sways the lot I 2
That shall portion them the plot
Each shall hold, a stranger he
From the Scythian colony
That came o'er the Pontic deep
To Chalybia's country steep:
Stern divider, judge severe!
What possession find they here?
What their heritage? So much
As the dead man's corse may touch,
So much either shall obtain,
Nothing more of all yon plain.

When fratricidal death II 1
Hath stopped their raging breath,
And Earth's dust drunk dark draughts of sinful gore,
What charm may purge the guilt
Of blood so foully spilt?
Whose hand shall bathe them? O unhappy store
Of fresh woes for this house, blent with the woes before!

I mourn that ancient crime II 2
Rued by all after time,—
Three generations now have borne the weight,
Since—maugre Phoebus' word
Thrice from the tripod heard,

How 'twas the constant will of sovran Fate,
That, dying without seed, he should preserve the
state—

Laius, by love o'ercome, III 1
Begat his own sure doom,
Sad Oedipus, the slayer of his sire,
Who ploughed the field where erst
His embryo bones were nurst,
And reared a crop that bloomed in murderous ire.
Infatuate bride and groom, so drawn by mad desire!

Evils are like a surge III 2
Where billows billows urge:
Each peers three-crested o'er the wave that's gone,
Thundering abaft the helm,
And threatening to o'erwhelm
The frail defence that braves that waste alone.
I fear lest, with her kings, Thebes may be now o'er-
thrown.

When dawns the Fate-appointed day, IV 1
The agèd curse is hard to allay.
Once here, Destruction rides not past
Till those are fallen beneath the blast
Whose toil-earned wealth, too highly heaped,
Brings ruin, and the man hath reaped
But sacrifice of all at last.

Who more admired of gods and men IV 2
Than Oedipus was honoured then,
By all who shared the city's hearth,
Drawing rich life from Theban earth,
When he had freed the land from fear
Of the Sphinx-monster seated near,
Dire minister of death and dearth?

But when he came to know V 1
The measure of his woe,
That wretched wedlock with dire anguish fraught,
Unequal to sustain
The stress of that sore pain
A twofold evil his rash spirit wrought.

First, with the hand that smote his sire, he reft
Himself of sight, his only comfort left.

Then with his children wroth V 2
He fiercely launched on both
A savage curse for their unfilial ways:
How with steel-furnished hand
They should divide his land
And heritage in lapse of after days.
Even now the fear works strongly in my soul,
The Erinys of that curse runs close upon her goal.

Enter 2ND MESSENGER.

2ND MESS. Take courage, children, whom the mother's care
Keeps tender. Thebe hath escaped the yoke
Of threatened bondage; her impetuous foes
Are fallen from their pitch of vaunting pride,
While she sails onward under smiling skies,
No water shipped from that sore buffeting,
No breach in all her towers, no port unsure:
So firm the warrant of those bulwarks set
Singly to guard them. All but all is well—
All in six gateways. But the seventh was held
By a dread champion self appointed there.
For there Apollo chose to bring to pass
Of Laius' ancient folly the last meed,
Accomplished on the stock of Oedipus.

CHO. What worse than heretofore afflicts the state?

2ND MESS. *They are fallen in death, by their own* kindred slain.

CHO. Who are fallen? What say'st thou? I am wild with dread.

2ND MESS. Be tame, and hearken. Oedipus' two sons—

CHO. Lie yonder! Terrible! Yet tell it forth.

2ND MESS. In equal sculture of indifferent dust.

CHO. Too near in dreadful kinship! slaying and slain!

2ND MESS. The Genius of them both was even so dire,
So undistinguishing: and with one stroke
Consigns to nothingness that hapless race.
Thus joy and weeping mingle. We rejoice
For Thebè faring gloriously, but weep
For her two chieftains, generals of this war,
Who with the hammered strength of Scythian steel
Have so divided their inheritance,
That, carried headlong by their father's curse,
Ill-fated, each inherits so much earth
As in his burial he may occupy.
Thebè is rescued: but her princes twain
By mutual slaughter fratricidally
Are perished: their own land hath drunk their blood.

CHORUS.

Mighty Zeus and guardian powers
Rescuers of Cadmus' towers,
Shall I raise the joyous cry
For the scathless victory
Thebes hath won, or weep and mourn
For the hapless chiefs forlorn
Dying, in an ill-starred strife,
Childless in the morn of life?
Impious was their purpose proud,
Dire the fate whereto they bowed,
Rightly answering either name:
Keen in strife and true in fame.

O fraught with gloom I 1
Curse of the sire upon the race fulfilled!
With horror at my heart my veins are chilled.
A funeral Bacchantè, for their tomb
A dirge I have framed, how on the battle floor,
Dreadfully slain, their bodies lie in gore.
Sure ominous of evil doom
This warrior fellowship i' the open field.

The father's prayer I
For evil hath full course and doth prevail;
Nor doth the faithless folly of Laius fail,

Surrounding Thebè close with anxious care.
Since the oracles lose nothing of their power.
Past thought is the affliction of this hour,—
The deed of that ill-omened pair,
No tragic burden of a poet's tale.

Cho. 1. Our horror heaves in sight. They come, they are here

Cho. 2. Two cares, two proud heroic themes of woe.

Cho. 1. An impo[illegible] fatal end on either bier.

Cho. 2. What shall I say? These halls their sorrow know.

Come, let the measured stroke of hand on brow
Guide the sad con[illegible] with the [illegible]less prow
And sable canv[illegible] on her [illegible] way
Where bright Apollo never brings the day,
O'er Acheron with wind[illegible] of [illegible] fanned
Unto the viewl[illegible] [illegible] strand.

See! with reluctant ste[illegible] and sl[illegible]w
Proportioned to the task of w[illegible].
Antigonè, Ismene [illegible]
Bringing their brethren to the tomb
Surely from either [illegible] breast
Deep-shrouded in [illegible] vest
Rich strains of heart-felt grief will ring
Nobly as they for [illegible] spring
[*The Chorus* [illegible] *themselves in* [illegible] *divisions*, Antigone *and* Ismene *accompanying* [illegible] *severally*

Cho. Oh! most unhappy in your brethren's will
Of all that round their [illegible] the [illegible] wind.
Our tears, our groans [illegible] lamentations shrill
Shall prove our perfect [illegible] and faithful mind.

Ant. O men perverse [illegible] friendly rede,
N[illegible]t to be daunted [illegible] deed.
The war ye levied hath [illegible] the fall.
O most unhappy [illegible] all hapless

II. Cho. 1. Yes most [illegible] whose all hapless doom
Brings shame and ruin on their natal home

2ND MESS. The Genius of them both was even so dire,
So undistinguishing: and with one stroke
Consigns to nothingness that hapless race.
Thus joy and weeping mingle. We rejoice
For Thebè faring gloriously, but weep
For her two chieftains, generals of this war,
Who with the hammered strength of Scythian steel
Have so divided their inheritance,
That, carried headlong by their father's curse,
Ill-fated, each inherits so much earth
As in his burial he may occupy.
Thebè is rescued: but her princes twain
By mutual slaughter fratricidally
Are perished: their own land hath drunk their blood.

CHORUS.

Mighty Zeus and guardian powers
Rescuers of Cadmus' towers,
Shall I raise the joyous cry
For the scathless victory
Thebes hath won, or weep and mourn
For the hapless chiefs forlorn
Dying, in an ill-starred strife,
Childless in the morn of life?
Impious was their purpose proud,
Dire the fate whereto they bowed,
Rightly answering either name:
Keen in strife and true in fame.

O fraught with gloom I 1
Curse of the sire upon the race fulfilled!
With horror at my heart my veins are chilled.
A funeral Bacchantè, for their tomb
A dirge I have framed, how on the battle floor,
Dreadfully slain, their bodies lie in gore.
Sure ominous of evil doom
This warrior fellowship i' the open field.

The father's prayer I 2
For evil hath full course and doth prevail;
Nor doth the faithless folly of Laius fail,

urrounding Thebè close with anxious care,
nce the oracles lose nothing of their power.
ast thought is the affliction of this hour,—
The deed of that ill-omened pair,
o tragic burden of a poet's tale.

Cho. 1. Our horror heaves in sight. They come, they are here.
Cho. 2. Two cares, two proud heroic themes of woe.
Cho. 1. An impious-fatal end on either bier.
Cho. 2. What shall I say? These halls their sorrow know.
ome, let the measured stroke of hand on brow
urle the sad convoy with the formless prow
nd sable canvas, on her sunless way
Where bright Apollo never brings the day,
'er Acheron with winds of sighing fanned
Into the viewless, all-receiving strand.

ee! with reluctant steps and slow
Proportioned to the task of woe,
ntigonè, Ismenè, come,
Bringing their brethren to the tomb.
urely from either virgin breast
Deep-shrouded in ambrosial vest,
Such strains of heart-felt grief will ring
Noble as they for whom they spring.

[*The* Chorus *range themselves in two divisions, accompanying* Antigone *and* Ismene *severally.*

Cho. Oh! most unhappy in your brethren's will
Of all that round their robes the cincture wind,
Our tears, our groans, our lamentations shrill
Shall prove our perfect soul and faithful mind.

Ant. O men perverse, stubborn to friendly rede, I 1
Not to be daunted from your evil deed,
The war ye levied hath procured the fall,
O most unhappy! of your father's hall.

II. Cho. 1. Yes most unhappy, whose all-hapless doom
Brings shame and ruin on their natal home.

Is. Ye that have ruined what your fathers built, I 2
With fell ambition for dire ends ye spilt
Each the other's blood. By sovereignty beguiled,
With interchange of steel ye are reconciled.
H. Cho. 2. Well doth the fury of Oedipus fulfil
The dread presaging of a father's will.

Ant. Through the left side each brother took the harm II 1
Launched from the brother's arm.
Omen twofold of monstrous woe,
O curse of maddening power, directing blow for blow!
H. Cho. 1. That stroke with voiceless force
Did both from life, from home, from kin, divorce,
Possessed through their own father's curse
With jarring destiny of passionate thoughts perverse.

Is. Grief holds the town, the wall, the peopled plain, II 2
While to their heirs remain
The riches whence the quarrel grew
That found no end of broils, till each his brother slew.
H. Cho. 2. Their eager hearts of rage
With equal hand have shared their heritage;
Yet the arbiter their friends may blame,
Nor love they that grim power who sets the spirit aflame.

Ant. Thrust through with steel they lie III 1
Spear-stricken: then what doom
Waits them? Will none reply?
H. Cho. 1. Peace in their father's tomb.
Now for their convoy comes from forth their hall
Heart-rending grief's true note of melancholy
With gloomy cheer, and tears of passion holy
Wrung from my heart that pines as I lament their fall.

Is. Their funeral dirge may say— III 2
'Much harm they did the state.
But more, in bloody fray,
To strange hosts at the gate.'

V 1
ANT. My vext soul raves—
IS. My heart doth inly mourn—
ANT. For thee }
IS. For thee } ANT. Once Thebè's pride—
IS. To misery born.
ANT. Killed by thine own.
IS. Destined thine own to quell.
ANT. A twofold sorrow—
IS. To behold—
ANT. To tell.—
The burden of our grief is drawing near.
IS. Brother to sisters. Brother, I am here.
CHO. Fate, o'er our heads thy potent frown doth lower;
O shade of Oedipus, this is thine hour!
O dark Erinys, dreadful is thy power!

V 2
ANT. Horrors to sight,—
IS. Returning, thou didst bring.
ANT. Slaying, but not saved.
IS. Lost in thy home-coming.
ANT. Lost and destroying.
IS. He, too, gave the blow.
ANT. O troublous family!
IS. O end of woe!
ANT. Like tale of sorrows that the spirit quell!
IS. Like dreadful to behold, like dire to tell.
CHO. Fate, o'er our heads thy potent frown doth lower;
O shade of Oedipus, this is thine hour!
O dark Erinys, dreadful is thy power!

ANT. Thou knowest the worst.
IS. And thou, in one event.
ANT. Since thou camest home.
IS. To oppose him with the spear.
ANT. To afflict thy house with evil hardiment.
IS. To afflict thy land that mourns around thy bier.
ANT. To afflict me most.
IS. And me too, more than all.
ANT. Of all ill-fated ones—

Is. Eteocles first!
Ant. O ye, most deeply mourned for in your fall.
Is. O ye, with fratricidal fury accurst!
Where shall we lay them?
Ant. In the holiest ground.
Is. Beside their sire? Horrors will there abound.

Herald.

'Tis mine to announce the will and firm decree
Of the high council of this Theban state.
Eteocles, as loyal to his land,
Shall be insepulchred beneath her shade:
Free from offence against her holy things
He died where most beseems young men to die.
So much I am charged to speak concerning him.
But this, his brother Polynices' corpse,
Graveless shall be cast forth for dogs to tear,
As minded to lay waste our Theban land,
Had not some god stood in his path and foiled
His spear: dead though he be, his country's gods
Shall ban him, since he brought in their despite
A foreign host to invade and subjugate
Their city. Wherefore 'tis decreed for him
To reap his recompense from fowls of the air
In shameful burial. No drink-offerings
Poured on his tomb by careful hands, no sound
Of dirgeful wailing shall enhance his fame,
Nor following of dear footsteps honour him.
So runs the enactment of our Theban lords.
Ant. But I make answer to the lords of Thebes,
Though none beside consent to bury him,
I will provide my brother's funeral.
I will face that danger, recking not of shame
In disobeying so the state's behest.
Too strong for that the tie of kindred blood
Which binds us, sprung from two unfortunates,
That mother and that sire. Then, O my soul,
Of thine own living will, share thou the wrongs
Forced on the helpless dead: be leal and true.
My brother's flesh no meagre-bellied wolves

Shalt tear and pull. Let no man dream of it.
I, though a woman, will prepare his mound,
Carrying the earth in this fine garment's fold.
I will cover him, let none think otherwise.
Nay, doubt me not! Will shall devise a way.
HER. I bid thee spare this violence to the state.
ANT. I bid thee spare commands beyond thy sphere.
HER. Be warned; a people rescued knows not ruth.
ANT. Be ruthless, but he shall have burial.
HER. How? Whom the city hates thou'lt thus exalt?
ANT. Heaven hath already meted him his due.
HER. But first he had endangered this fair land.
ANT. He answered wrong with hostile violence.
HER. 'Gainst all he wrestled for the fault of one.
ANT. Contention ever seeks the latest word.
I will bury him that's here; enough! No more!
HER. Take thine own course; my voice forbids the deed.

CHO. Proud powers of ruin that have blasted all
The deeply-rooted stock of Laius' race!
What counsel, what device, shall we embrace,
What destined course? Must we not weep thy fall,
Nor follow to thy final resting-place?
The people's anger is of power to appal.
Thou shalt have many mourners, but *thy* fate
A sister's lonely voice shall celebrate.
O hapless corse! O stern decree!
What heart but yields reluctantly?
II. CHO. 1. Nay, let the city visit those that weep
For Polynices, howsoe'er it may.
We will escort him on his funeral way,
And lull him to his everlasting sleep.
All Thebans own this grief, and wavering still
Are rules of right set by the popular will.
II. CHO. 2. Right and the people's will one counsel urge,
And we will follow his renownèd bier,
Who under Heaven saved Cadmus' town from fear
Of overthrow beneath the whelming surge
Of foreign foemen. From those threatening seas
Zeus rescued us, and brave Eteocles.

THE ORESTEIAN TRILOGY

One only trilogy of Aeschylus remains complete (or nearly so); but it is fortunately one composed by him in the maturity of his powers, and is universally acknowledged to take rank amongst the world's masterpieces.

The subject is the troublous history of 'Pelops' line,' of which the unnatural horrors are regarded as culminating in the matricide of Orestes. Of the whole trilogy, considered as one three act tragedy, the crisis and turning-point is at line 889 of the 'Choephoroe,' where Clytemnestra calls for an axe, wherewith to defend herself against her son

The first of the three acts, or dramas, concludes with the murder of Agamemnon by his wife Clytemnestra, and the usurpation by Aegisthus, her paramour, of the Argive throne The second ends with the flight of Orestes, pursued by the Erinyes, or Furies, after his unnatural act. They are 'his mother's furies' because she has invoked them, and they are in so far the personification of her vengeful wrath. But these dread forms have also a wider significance, embodying the principle of retribution (1) for violation of domestic sanctities, and (2) for all unrighteous action.

The third drama, *The Eumenides*, aims at reconciling conflicting principles, and at softening retribution through equity The Erinyes, who appear at first implacable, are pacified by the interposition of Athena. And the Court of Areopagus is founded by her, to determine future cases of homicide

In the Satyric drama 'Proteus,' which completed the tetralogy, some reference was probably made to the fortunes of Menelaus, whose continued absence had been commented on in the 'Agamemnon,' and referred to (probably) in the 'Choephoroe' (l 1038—

AGAMEMNON

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA

A Watchman.
CHORUS *of the Argive Elders.*
CLYTEMNESTRA.
Herald.
AGAMEMNON.
CASSANDRA.
AEGISTHUS.

SCENE—Argos, before the palace of the Atridae.

TIME.—After the fall of Troy.

.

ARGOS is still the metropolis of Hellas, and the palace is occupied by the two sons of Atreus, Agamemnon and *Menelaus, as joint kings*. They have married sisters, Clytemnestra and Helenè, daughters of Tyndareus. But Helen has been carried off by Paris, and the two brothers are described as having together departed on the Trojan expedition. But the fleet was delayed at Aulis, and Agamemnon was induced to sacrifice his daughter Iphigenia, or Iphianassa. This act has awakened an inextinguishable hatred in the breast of her mother Clytemnestra, who remains in sole possession of the vast palace of the Pelopidae —that home which has already witnessed the banquet of Thyestes and other nameless iniquities. She sends away her son Orestes, and, amongst the horror-breathing silences, remains alone, possessed with the one thought, the one constant resolve, to take condign vengeance for her child.

But while alone in the palace, she is not alone in her desire of revenge. Aegisthus, the son of Thyestes, is bound in honour to be avenged for his brothers, whom Atreus massacred. He has returned to Argolis, but is still an outcast from the palace of the Pelopidae.

During the absence of Agamemnon and Menelaus these two hatreds have coalesced in one,—Clytemnestra, reckless of all but vengeance, Aegisthus, likewise loving revenge but not insensible to the charms of the kingdom and the Queen.

Their plot is favoured by the circumstance that, when Agamemnon returns, his brother Menelaus is still absent, having been intercepted by a violent storm. Although suspicion is rife, there has been no overt act either of adultery or usurpation. But after one of his secret visits, Aegisthus has left with Clytemnestra his sword. (Choeph. 1009.)

After entangling her husband in the rich hangings, or carpetings, over which she has persuaded him to walk in entering the palace, the Queen dispatches him with the sword of Aegisthus.

The King had brought home with him Cassandra, the

daughter of Priam. This insult serves to whet the Queen's revenge. And the character of the prophetic maiden, her destined victim, stands in pathetic contrast to that of the royal murderess.

The King's death-shriek is, of course, the crisis of the play, and more than justifies the gloomy presentiments which damp all attempts at cheerfulness on the part of the Watchman, the Chorus, and the Herald. For this culminating horror the mind of the spectator has been further prepared, first by certain lurid flashes of Clytemnestra's demoniac joy, and then by a scene in which the growing apprehension of the event is mingled with the most poignant tenderness of pity, as Cassandra, the captive princess, whom Apollo has inspired and forsaken, prophetically describes both the past abominations of the house of Atreus, and the cruel doom that is immediately impending over Agamemnon and herself.

AGAMEMNON

WATCHMAN.

I ask the gods deliverance from the toil
Of these long watchings. Through twelve weary moons
Couched on the Atridae's house-top, like a dog,
With head on hand, and ever-wakeful eye,
I have conned the nightly concourse of the stars
That shine majestical in yon clear heaven,
And by their risings and their settings bring
Summer and winter to the world. To-night
I watch for the flame-signal that shall tell
To us in Argos tidings borne from Troy,
Voicing her capture. Such the strong command
Of an expectant, passionate, man-souled woman.
This bed of mine beneath the dews of night
Conduces not to rest. Dreams come not near it.
Else they are warned off by the sentinel Fear,
That will not let my lids securely close
Then if I whistle, or soothe a tune, providing
Such antidote 'gainst slumber, my sad heart
Checks me with groans for the calamities
That haunt this house,—not guided for the best
As once it was.—Well! may the nightly flame
Soon, with glad news, release me from my toil.
[*The beacon is seen.*
All hail! thou light in darkness, harbinger
Of day indeed, author of many a song
And dance in Argos, born of this event!
Soli, soli!
I cry aloud to Agamemnon's queen
That from her couch she spring with speed, and raise
Clamour of joy to hail this beacon-light,
For Troy is taken; so the fires declare.

Nay, I'll begin, and dance by way of prelude.
Marking my master's game, I'll cry 'Huzzá!
Good luck! Three sixes, thrown by Bonfire-blaze!'—
Good luck, do I say? 'Twill be some joy to hold
The kind hand of this kingdom's lord in mine.
Beyond that, I am silent. A strange weight
Oppresses heart and tongue. Could the house speak
It might have much to tell. My lips will open,
With my good will, only to those that know.

CHORUS (*entering*).

Nine years are gone, and the tenth is here,
Since he whom Priam had cause to fear,
Menelaus, wreaking a mighty wrong,
And Agamemnon, in glory strong,
With twofold sceptre and throne secure
Gifted by Him whose gifts are sure—
Two sons of Atreus leagued in power,
Of Argive youth led forth the flower,
Well armed for aid, the Aegean o'er,
In a thousand ships from yonder shore.

Shouting they went, with hearts aflame
For the furious War-god's eager game.
Like eagles, that over their eyrie wheel,
Driven wide by the sudden pang they feel
For their eaglets torn from the long-watched nest,
Oaring their path in wild unrest
With pens for oar-blades,—till one on high,
Pan or Apollo, hearing the cry
Of the birds who tenant his realm of air,
Is moved by the sound of their shrill despair,
And sends on the sinner, albeit too late,
To redress that wrong, an avenging fate.

So mightier Zeus, who guards the home
From outrage of guests that idly roam,
'Gainst Paris both the Atridae brought,
For a woman, whose marriage vows were naught,
Broaching a flood of toils, to flow
For Greek and Trojan with equal woe,—

When the knee outwearied should press the dust,
And the spear be snapped in his virgin thrust.—
Each hour hath proof of the daily state,
But the end shall be as 'tis ruled by Fate.
No late libation, or incense-fume,
Avails to save from a ruthless doom
The man who has angered, through mad desire,
The Powers that burn, but need no fire.
Now we, discarded through Time's decay,
Dropt from the roll that mustering day,
Remain, supporting, as weakness craves,
Our child-like gait upon walking-staves.
For the sap that sprang in our breasts of yore
Knows of his youthful might no more,
And the warlike spirit hath left his seat.
What task for withering Eld is meet?
Doting, he wanders his three-foot way,
Proving such valour as children may,
Of no more strength than a dream in the day.

But thou, Clytemnestra, royal dame,
What cause hath kindled thine altar-flame?
What new hath fallen? What tidings heard
With sudden motion thy heart have stirred,
To raise by thy missives ranging wide
Frankincense fuming on every side?
Of all the gods that in Argos dwell,
Gods of Olympus, and gods of Hell,
Gods of the palace, gods of the street,
Gods who preside where the people meet,
Where'er is harboured a power divine,
Thy gifts are blazing at every shrine.
Here, there, and yonder, on high doth spire
With holy meaning the fragrant fire,
Fed with rich oils, that mildly soothe
Our doubtful hearts with warrant of truth:
Since the royal perfume with potent spell
From the palace whispers that all is well.—
Whate'er thou mayest, to our minds reveal,
O queen, of thy bounty, and timely heal

Our heart's foreboding, that riseth still
One while with thoughts of impending ill,
Till Hope, appearing with kindly light
From the altar, greets our reviving sight,
And strives to banish the carking care
That fiercely feeds on the soul's despair.

Full power is mine to sing what heartening sign I 1
Ushered the flower of warriors on their way:—
Yet soars my spirit; yet, from springs divine,
Life yields me valour to uplift the lay,
Telling how, on a day,
The king of birds marshalled two kings of men,—
Joint leaders of the youth of Hellas, then
On ship-board led against the Teucrian land
With store of vengeance in each spear-armed hand:—
A warlike sign! Two eagles on the right:
Full in the army's sight,
Hard by yon royal roof they took their place
(One black in all his plumes, one flecked with white),
Gorging together on a brooding hare,
O'ertaken in her latest chase,
A creature of despair!
Then be your burden sad with sounds of wail,
But let the happier note prevail.

The careful prophet saw the Atridae twain, I 2
And straightway in the hare-devourers scanned
Those warlike leaders with their differing strain;
Then thus he spake prophetic: 'Yonder band
In time shall take the land
Of royal Priam: and the public store
Wherewith the towers of Troy were filled before,
Stern fate through violent shocks of armèd power
Shall pitilessly ransack and devour.
Only, may no offence from Heaven distain
The bridle of Ilion's plain,
That brilliant army, crossed by heavenly ire!
Since holiest Artemis, with wrath o'erta'en,
Frowns as they feast on

Those winged minions of her Sire.
She abhors the eagles' food.'
Then be your burden sad with sounds of wail,
But let the happier note prevail.

'The beauteous goddess, though so kind II
To eanlings of the ravening lion-race,
And tender sucklings of all beasts of chase,
Doth yet accord her mind
To fair fulfilment of the favouring sign.
Ah! but on Phoebus yet I call,
Healer in dangers all,
Lest for the Argives, with intent malign,
She raise contrarious winds of dire delay,
Minded another victim to exchange
In sacrifice unauthorized and strange,
Attended *with no festival*,
Breeding dark strife within the hall,
Hardening the *wife* against the husband's sway.
A mindful keeper of the house shall burn
To avenge her offspring at her lord's return.'
Such words of doom, mingled with fortunate things,
Calchas outspake, touching our race of kings.
Then be your burden sad with sounds of wail
But let the happier note prevail.

Zeus—by what name soe'er III 1
He glories being addressed,
Even by that holiest name
I name the Highest and Best.
On Him I cast my troublous care,
My only refuge from despair:
Weighing all else, in Him alone I find
Relief from this vain burden of the mind.

One erst appeared supreme, III 2
Bold with abounding might,
But like a darkling dream
Vanished in long past night,
Powerless to save, and he is gone
Who flourished since, in turn to own

His conqueror, to whom with soul on fire
Man crying aloud shall gain his heart's desire,—

Zeus, who prepared for men IV 1
The path of wisdom, binding fast
Learning to suffering. In their sleep
The mind is visited again
With memory of affliction past.
Without the will, reflection deep
Reads lessons that perforce shall last.
Thanks to the power that wields the sovran oar,
Resistless, toward the eternal shore.

And the elder leader then IV 2
Of all the Achaeans, blaming not
The prophet, but with quivering lips
Bending his spirit to the strain
Of that unlooked-for, adverse lot,—
What time the Achaeans by their ships
Were sore distressed with anxious thought,
By baffling winds, that drained that opulent host,
Storm-stayed on Aulis' weary coast.

For fronting Chalkis' bay, V 1
Helpless as logs the Achaean galleys lay;
While blasts of dire delay from Strymon's mouth,
Authors of hunger, weariness and drouth,
Driving poor wights from hospitable shores,
Doubling the loss of time through waste of stores,
Sparing nor ships nor cordage, wore away
The flower of Argive youth.—
And when the prophet cried,
Voicing a plan to cure the army's pain,
Even than that cruel wind
More cruel to the chieftains in their pride,
Recalling Artemis to mind,
Whereat the Atridae with their sceptres twain
Striking the ground, from tears could not refrain;

"'Twere hard to disobey,' V 2
These words the elder chieftain spake that day,

'But were 't not hard on the altar-step to stand
And stain with virgin streams a father's hand?
O heavy doom! if I my child must slay—
Who sheds upon my home its brightest ray!
Which way I turn is fraught with evil still,
No course exempt from ill.
How should I fail the fleet?
How sin against the bond myself engaged?
This blood will stay the [illegible]
Then for the blood of maiden pure and sweet,
The ruin of a faithless [illegible]
Sorrow must yield to passionate [illegible]
Of strong desire. May all be for the best!' VI

So when his neck received the fatal yoke,
Within his breast arose the [illegible] depths [illegible]
And impious thoughts from [illegible]
broke,
Unholy and fraught with bale
An altered man, he recked no more of [illegible]
For the first shock of grief [illegible]
Hardens the spirit, that [illegible]
With maddening counsel. He, that dreadful time,
Endured to slay his daughter, so to aid
The warfare in a woman's cause arrayed,—
So to advance the fleet
With favouring auspice meet!

What cared that council, eager for the strife, VI 2
That on her lip the name of father hung,
That unpolluted was her virgin life,
So pure, so bright, so young!
The father bade those priests, after the prayer,
Above the altar, face to earth, on high,
Like kidling there to lift her ruthlessly,
With garments drooping round her, and the fair
Sweet mouth to bridle with speech-stifling force,
Lest some faint cry, heard in that ritual's course,
Might bring disastrous doom
Upon her father's home.

She shed to earth her veil of saffron dye, VII 1
And smote her sacrificers one by one
With pity-kindling arrows from her eye,
Willing to speak, as if some artist hand
That dumb fair piece had done.
How often in her own dear land
She charmed the feasters in her father's hall,
With fresh young voice honouring his festival,
And with her loving presence graced the store
Of scathless plenty on that palace-floor!

What followed then I saw not, nor will tell; VII 2
The mystic arts of Calchas won their way.
Nor on things future boots it now to dwell;
Farewell to that! Clear, in the history's close,
'Twill dawn with the new day.
Knowledge belongs of right to those
Who read the lesson of the fact they feel.
Fore-thinking were fore-sorrowing. May the wheel
Bring round good fortune! such the wishful mind
Of us, last guards of Argos left behind.

Enter CLYTEMNESTRA.

LEADER OF CHO. Queen Clytemnestra, we are come to render
Our duties to thy royalty. For when
The kingly throne is vacant, it is meet
The consort of the prince should have all homage.
We are here with loyal hearts intent to learn
If some good tidings coming to thine ear
Have prompted thine auspicious sacrifice.
Speak, if thou wilt. If not, we rest content.

CLY. 'With glad intelligence,' the proverb saith,
'Let Morning issue from the womb of Night.'
A joy beyond your hope 'tis yours to hear.
Our Argive host hath taken Priam's town.

CHO. How? 'Tis incredible. Speak yet again.

CLY. Troy is in Grecian hands. Are those words plain?

CHO. Unlooked for joy brings tears into mine eye.

CLY. Those tears attest your loyalty of heart.
CHO. But hast thou proof that may be trusted, lady?
CLY. Unless some god have been deceiving me.
CHO. Hast thou then hearkened to some flattering dream?
CLY. No slumbrous fancies work on my belief.
CHO. But some speech omen, lighting on thy soul—
CLY. Should that elate me like a girl? Ye mock me!
CHO. Say, then, how long ago the city fell.
CLY. In the same night that now brings forth the day.
CHO. What messenger could bear the news so swiftly?
CLY. The Fire-god flashed it hither from Mount Ida.
Fire was the post, and beacons were the stages.
First Ida sent him to the Hermaean bluff
Of Lemnos, whence the flaring torch that rose
Was caught by Athos, Zeus's promontory;
Thence high aloft, far glancing o'er the sea,
The blazing pine sped on the traveller-flame,
Making strange sunrise on Makistus' height,
Who, ready for that dawn, neglected not
A courier's office, but gave signal far
Across Euripus to the watchmen set
On wild Messapius. They replied and sent
The glad news onward, kindling a dry heap
Of aged heather. And the mighty flame,
Nought bating of his radiant power, o'erleapt
Asopus' flats, and, like a brilliant moon
Silvering the forehead of Cithaeron, waked
A fresh relay of courier torches there:
Nor was the far-sped beacon flame denied;
But re-inforcing it beyond command,
That mountain guard upreared a royal blaze,
To shoot beyond Gorgopis' bay and strike
The mount of Aegiplanctus, where it roused
Loyal renewal of the appointed fire.
Heaping on fuel with unsparing hand,
They raised a beard like pyramid of flame,
Whose light rushed past the foreland that looks forth
Towards Aegina, till it reached the height
That crowns our city, this Arachnian hill:—

Whence, lastly, on the Atridae's roof lights down
That lineal offspring of the Idaean flame.
Such torch-race had we ordered and prepared,
In bright successive courses ministered.
But here one runner, first and last i' the race,
Hath touched the goal and shouted 'Victory!'
This is the proof and token I proclaim,
Sent by my husband from the heart of Troy.
Cho. O lady, our thanksgivings shall be paid
To Heaven, hereafter. We would hear thee still,
Listening and wondering,—so thou wouldst speak anew.
Cly. To-day the Achaeans are possessed of Troy.
A jarring din, methinks, is rising there!
Into one vessel pouring oil and vinegar
You will not see them lovingly combine.
Even so the captives' and the captors' cries
Tell diverse tales of Fortune's twofold power.
Those now are fallen about the prostrate forms
Of husbands, brothers, friends,—young children, too,
Clinging to grey-haired fathers,—and from throats
No longer free, lament their dearest slain.
But these, being wearied with the night's exploit,
O'er-watched and hungry, break their fast i' the town
On what is yet to be found there,—not by rule—
No order, no precedence, no degree,—
But even as each hath plucked the lot of chance.
So now inhabiting the ransacked homes
Of captive Trojans, sheltered from the dews
And frosts of the open field, as men released
From toil, they will sleep all night, nor dream of danger.
And if they reverence well the gods that hold
The captured city, and the temples there,
The spoiler may escape being spoiled. But let
No lust seduce that host to plunder things
Inviolable, as overcome by greed.
The race is not yet over. Still remains
The home-return, to round their emulous course.
Yea, even without offended Deity

For wealth ne'er proved a fortress for the man
Who, mad with having, insolently ran
At Right's high altar, in his impious thought
Minded to hurl it into nought.

But strong Delusion, Sin's disastrous child, I 2
Brooding o'er future trespass, works her will
Remediless. Not to be reconciled
Nor yet concealed, the bane is shining still,
As in the assaying peers the base alloy,
With lurid brilliance ruinously clear.
Even so he fares, who, like a wanton boy,
Chases the bird that mocks his eager hand,
And on his people brings a careless brand.
Loudly he prays, but none in heaven will hear.
God strikes to earth the man of unjust ways,
Outcast from hope of praise.
So Paris, harboured in these halls, defiled
With base ingratitude the Atridae's home.
He wronged the chieftain of yon stately dome,
Stealing with robber guile the beauteous wife,
Unfaithful cause of future strife.

She left unto her friends in Argos here II 1
Clashing of shields, arming of ships and men,
And, taking to the city of her new lord
Destruction for a dowry, lightly then
She passed the portal, sinning without fear,
Whilst ominous voices there that flight deplored:
'Woe for the palace home! Woe for her spouse!
Woe for her wifely ways within the house!
He stands dishonoured, silent, murmuring not,
Soul-stricken before that unremovèd blot,
While longing for the lost one over seas
Shall banish all heart's-ease,
That some unbodied ghost shall seem
To rule the house, as in a dream.
The loveliest forms of stone
To that deserted one
Are hateful. In the spirit's listless void
All sense of beauty sinks destroyed.

'Yet visions of the night, born of regret, II 2
Bring to his saddened soul a vain delight.
Is it not vain if, when one thinks to reap
Strange joy, the cherished object fleets from sight
(Even while with gladdening tears the eyes are wet)
On wings that follow with the steps of sleep?'
Such homefelt wounds within the palace wall
Are bleeding. Ay, and would that these were all!—
Nay, everywhere through Grecian lands is seen,
In each man's home, much heart corroding teen.
From Grecian lands together forth they went,
Each by their loved ones sent,
And now the soul of friends is sore
To think whom they shall see no more.
Whom they sent forth they know,
But to their bitter woe,
No well-loved form, but urns of crumbling earth
Return to each man's natal hearth.

Ares, grim usurer of blood and breath, III 1
That swings his balance o'er the field of death,
Sends back from Ilium to their friends
(For warriors' loss no just amends)
Their ashes blackened by the funeral fire.—
Poor dust! so heavy not with gold but grief,
Affording to the dumb desire
Of tears but scant relief
Then as with tender heed they store away
Each precious burden in its vase of clay,
They groan, while praising one for skill in fight
And one for his brave conduct in the strife,
'Fallen to avenge another warrior's wife.'
This last is murmured low,
While silent wrath doth grow
'Gainst Atreus' sons, great champions of their right.
Others, with limbs unravaged, in the shade
By Ilion's bulwarks made,
Rest undisturbed,—the hostile land they hold
Hides them beneath her kindly mould.

Ah! dangerous are the murmurs of the town! III 2
A nation's curse lives in the people's frown.
One thought of mine night yet doth shroud:
It would be spoken, but not loud:
Great bloodshed draws the gaze of Deity.
The dark Erinys in long lapse of time
Grinds down to helpless poverty
Him who in ways of crime
Hath flourished, but in dim reverse of doom
Shall stain the lustre of that odious bloom;
And, once among the lost, he hath no more force.
Danger is theirs, too, that are praised by all:
From jealous eyes the fire of Heaven doth fall.
Mine be the moderate lot
That envy blasteth not!
I would not run the royal conqueror's course,
Nor yet would I be conquered, and behold
The life I shared of old
Subdued to strangers, and my country's folk
Writhing beneath an alien yoke.

Good news delivered by the beacon flash IV 1
Shot through the city a rumour swift and rash,
Yet who can tell if things be as they seem,
Or God have sent us a deceitful gleam?
'Twere childish or insensate to allow
One's heart to kindle at that cheering glow,
And quench it when a word
Of differing note is heard.

None but a woman, framed of hopes and fears, IV 2
Should yield assent before the fact appears.
Persuasion soon invades the female's realm:
Her judgment's pale is quickly overthrown;
Feebly she holds an unresisting helm:
But fading soon to nothing the renown
Told by a woman's tongue
Will not endure for long.

And dug the ground there with the spade of Doom,
That, by the righteous will of Zeus most high,
Temples and altars are no more, no more
A germ of life in all the desolate land.
Such yoke is cast upon proud Ilion's neck
By the elder son of Atreus, who this day
Returns, a happy warrior, of all men
Most to be honoured, having wreaked in full
The rape of Helen on all the Trojan name.
Not Paris, or all his people leagued in one,
May boast their suffering lighter than their deed.
Proclaimed a thief and robber, he hath lost
More than his booty, having razed to the earth
His father's house and ravaged his own land.
Priam's sons have paid the penalty twice o'er.

CHO. Hail! herald of the host; I bid thee joy.

HER. Yea; from this moment I could welcome death.

CHO. Didst thou so yearn for this thy fatherland?

HER. So that warm tears stand in mine eyes for gladness.

CHO. Then in that trouble ye were not unblest.

HER. Let me be master of that speech. Explain.

CHO. Being touched with love of those who longed for you.

HER. Mean you the land yearned likewise for her sons?

CHO. Ay! these dim souls have often sighed for you.

HER. Whence came this cloud upon your spirits? Tell!

CHO. Silence hath long been our best remedy.

HER. How? Feared ye any man, your lord away?

CHO. In thine own words—we could have welcomed death.

HER. I spake that in my joy. Yet looking backward,
Doubtless, our hap was chequered with some woe.
Who, save the gods, eternally command
Pleasure unmingled? Were I now to tell
Our toils and hardships 'neath the open sky,
Lying on narrow bunks, ill-lined and bare,

Lamenting each day's lack of every store;
Then on firm land, still worse, to lodge i' the field,
Close under the enemy's wall, with rain from heaven
: dews from the damp meadow, drizzling over
ır clothes, our bodies, and our clotted hair:—
r should one tell o' the storm-wind, striking down
he falcon from her pride, with icy power
wooping from Ida's snows; or of the heat,
Then idle Ocean in his bed at noon
ay motionless, and not an air might breathe——
st no! Why grieve o'er troubles that are past?—
o past for some, as never any more
They will care to rise from where they lie. But we,
The living, why should we to-day count over
The lost, or mourn malignant Fortune's power?
Farewell, say I, to sorrow! We survive;
Our gain o'erweighs past trouble, and to-day
On land, or coursing over seas, we call
This morning's sun to look upon the host
Returning with triumphant spoils from Troy,
By us at length subdued,—to hang them up
In all the temples of Hellenic gods
A bright and everlasting monument.
Hear this, ye people, and extol your State
And our great leaders, duly rendering praise
To Zeus, first author of these gifts. I have said.

Enter CLYTEMNESTRA.

CHO. Your happy tidings have prevailed to cheer me.
The old are ever young enough to learn
When good approaches. And thy words bring good,
To our queen and palace first, and then to me.
CLY. Long since I raised the shout of joy, when
came
The first night-messenger of fire to tell
That Troy was taken, Ilion overthrown.
Men chid me, saying, 'Dost thou now believe,
Persuaded by a bonfire, Troy is fallen?
How like a woman to be thus elate!'
Yet brought I mine oblation, and glad cries

In female notes were sounded here and there
About the city,—as with incense poured
They soothed, at every shrine, the odorous flame.
Now, why ask more of thee? I shall hear all
From mine own husband when he comes. I will haste
Nobly to meet my lord's return. What light
Is sweeter to a woman's eyes than that
Which floods the opening gate when Heaven brings home
Her husband from the war? Bear back this word.
Let him come quickly, loved of all the land.
And may he find the wife he left behind
Unchanged, still faithful; watching o'er his home,
Like a good house-dog, fierce to his enemies,
But kind to him; and holding unprofaned
So long, the pressure of his last embrace.
Of joys with other men, or guilty word,
I know no more than of the blacksmith's art.
Such boast, instinct with honest truthfulness,
A noble wife may utter without blame. [*Exit.*

Cho. Herald, thine ear, a sound interpreter,
Hath taught thee the fair meanings of the queen.
But tell us now, we pray thee, of the prince
This land delights to honour, Menelaüs,—
Comes he with you in safety to his home?
Her. Were I to utter false glad tidings here,
Short-lived were that delight for those I love.
Cho. Ah then! let what is good be likewise true!
Goodness and truth dissevered are soon known.
Her. I tell the simple truth. The man is lost,
Gone from the fleet. His ship is no more seen.
Cho. Say, launched he forth from Troy in sight of men,
Or did a storm, that troubled all your host,
Snatch him away?
Her. You hit the centre there,
Condensing in brief words a world of woe.
Cho. How? What report from other mariners
Was noised about him as alive or dead?

HER. One only can with surety answer you,
he Sun, who nourishes Earth's various brood.
CHO. How mean you that the storm assailed the fleet
nd proved the executor of wrath from Heaven?
HER. A day of blessing ought not to be stained
With news of bale. Heaven's honour should be clear.
n evil messenger with darkened brow
hat brought you tidings of an army's fall,
twofold horror, doubly charged with woe,
irst for the country's wound, then for the homes
Whose men had been devoted to the scourge
oved of the War god, armed with death and dole—
The tongue so laden with calamities
Might chant this hymn of heavenly wrath.
But I,
Who come with news of peace and bright success
To a city smiling with prosperity,
Why must I dash my good with ill, by telling
Of the dire storm Heaven sent to plague our fleet?
Fire and the sea, those ancient foes, were leagued
In firm alliance visibly fulfilled
To wreck our ill starred navy. 'Twas i the night
Came the onset of the billowy adversary,
Big with disaster, for the Thracian blast
Smote ship 'gainst ship, that gored and butted each
Her neighbour, buffeted with swilling brine
And raging tempest, till they passed from sight
Like kine a madman drives. On that wild scene
The sun arising cloudless, showed us all
The Aegean strewn with wreaths of floating wreck,
And bodies of Achaean men Our vessel,
Some power divine, or pleading with the storm
Or thwarting him, made scathless. 'Twas no mariner,
But saving Providence, stood by our helm,
And steered us, neither to a boisterous road-stead,
Nor on the breakers of a rock lanced shore.
Then, rescued from that watery death, amidst
Fair daylight, not believing our escape,
Our thoughts were mindful of a new distress,
Mourning the wreck and havoc of our fleet.

May Heaven still work us good! So much is clear.
If any of those we parted from still breathe,
They reason of our death as we of theirs.
And as for Menelaus, let us hope
He above all may be preserved, and come
Back to his home. Zeus wills not yet, we trust,
His race should perish,—and will find some means
To keep him still in life. Somewhere the sun
Beholds him, and his eyes enjoy the day.
Now, Argives, I have told you all the truth.

CHORUS.

Who gave the ill-omened name, I 1
So fraught with terror for the time to be,
So true to her career of blame?
War-won, war-wed, war-wakening Helenè?
Was he some prophet-spirit unknown to fame,
With sure presentiment
Fore-speaking Time's event?
The name of Helen tells of ships aflame,
Of souls to Hades sent,
Of countries ravaged, cities overthrown.
From out the delicately curtained bower,
Borne by the West-wind's earthborn power,
In Paris' nimble galley forth she went,
And when they touched on Simois' shore,
With cytisus and myrtle overgrown,
A many-shielded pack
Following the viewless track
Of their swift oar,
Came bent on slaughterous feud and fierce arbitrament.

That *bond*, so rightly styled, I 2
Bound Ilium with a chain of endless care,
Sent by some spirit of anger wild
Resolved on ruin, minded to prepare
Revenge for hospitality defiled
On those who sang that day
The lawless marriage-lay,
Provoking wrath hard to be reconciled.

Her new-found brethren gay
Thought not if Zeus approved the enforcèd song.
Now they and theirs have learned a different strain,
And Priam's ancient town with pain
Groans heavily from forth her ashes grey,
Calling on Paris the accurst,
The guilty cause of unforgiven wrong;—
She that in wild despair
For generations fair
Herself had nursed,
Had spent long years of wailing 'midst the fray. II 1

What image fits Troy's fall?
A man, I will say,
Cherished within his hall
A cub, for play,
Just weaned, but hardly, from the lioness.
The prelude of his life
Was far from cruel strife;
The darling of young boys, a thing of sportiveness!
Even old men felt the charm,
Oft in the nestling arm
'Twas dandled, like to human babyhood;
When stroked, he made reply
With fondly brightening eye;
When hunger pressed he crouched and fawned for food. II 2

But as with time he grew
He showed his stock,
And with dire outrage slew
The home-bred flock,
So making ill return for all that care;
Till all the peaceful floor
With blood was dabbled o'er;
The household slaves beheld in mute despair.
The self-provided feast
Of that unbidden guest
Spread havoc round him wheresoe'er he moved.
Sent by some god to earth
To plague a sinful hearth,
A priest of Atè's self that nursling proved.

Even so methinks there came to Troia's town, III 1
  One tempered like the calm on windless seas,
A face to smite the soul but ne'er to frown,
  A joy luxurious, crowning wealth with ease.
Love there in bloom entranced the passionate mind.
  But soon she turned and made a bitter end
Of nuptial, in old Ilion's hour of need;
  By Zeus who punisheth where guests offend
Brought thither as a bane to Priam's seed:
Kinship unblest! companionship unkind,
Sad bride of tears, fell fury unconfined!

Wise lips declared, and 'tis an agèd saw, III 2
  That man's prosperity, maturely grown,
Hath offspring that succeeds by Heaven's high law,—
  From happy fortune misery full-blown:
A different thought by me shall be confessed;
  The issue of impious deeds is evil still,
With plenteous increase, like to like succeeding;
  Not so begets its race the righteous will,
But the fair life fair fortune aye is breeding.
No evil brood disturbs that peaceful nest.
The house of the upright evermore is blest.

The pride of former years engendereth pride IV 1
  Youngly insulting o'er calamity;
Or soon or late, what matters? When the tide
  Of time brings on the day of destiny
For that fell birth, even then is born the Power,
Unblest, resistless, making warriors cower,
Infatuate Boldness, whose o'ershadowing gloom
Veils all the house with darkness of the tomb;
Such parentage hath bloomed in such fell flower.

The light of Righteousness in smoky homes IV 2
  Shines unimpaired, honouring the humble lot;
From gilded halls impure, as Earth she roams,
  She turns her gaze to bless the pious cot;
The power of riches falsely stampt with praise
Wins not her worship by its spurious blaze;

And in time thou shalt clearly discover, of all thou didst
leave in command,
Who have failed or been faithful in keeping their charge
and protecting the land.

AGAM. Argos, dear country, and my country's gods!
Ye claim my foremost word. Without your aid
I had ne'er returned, nor wrought on Priam's town
This righteous retribution. Yea, the gods,
Moved by the unspoken pleadings, one and all
Gave sentence for the slaughterous sack of Troy.
The blood-stained Vase had all the votes. I' the other
'Hope lingered,' while no plenishing hand came near.—
Her smoke still shows the desolate city's fall.
'Tis Ruin's altar, whence the dying ashes
Of wealth consumed spout forth voluminous breath.
For this we are bound to recompense the gods
With mindful thank-offerings. Our vengeful snare
Held firm, that none escaped, but glorious Ilium
Was, for a woman's sake, ground into dust
By the apparition of the monstrous birth
That, whilst Orion sank, one autumn night,
Leapt from the Horse in Argive panoply.
A ravening lion, o'er the walls he sprang,
And lapped rich largess of the blood of princes.
So far forth I address the gods. Meanwhile,
I bear in mind your moderate words, and like
The spirit they convey. Your thoughts are mine.
Few men are born so tempered, as to look
Without some envy on a prosperous friend.
The venom of unkindness, lodged within,
Clings to the heart and doubles all annoy:
While men not only mind their own distress,
But groan at other men's prosperity.
How well I know, and could describe, the friend
In name, the mirror of companionship—
Indeed a mirror, a mere fleeting shade.
Odysseus only, who sailed against his will,
Once yoked with me, was ever staunch and true.
I say it of one of whom to-day I know not

If he be dead or yet alive.
For the rest,
Touching the city and the gods, we will call
Our larger council, and deliberate there
In full assembly, studying to preserve
Whatever in the present state is well;
And where some cure is needed, we will try,
With remedies gently administered,
Though sometime sharp and painful, to prevent
All dangerous malady.—Now, to my hall,
Where my first greeting shall again be made
To the kind gods, who sent me safely forth,
And bring me home in peace. May Victory,
Since hither she attends us, here remain!

Re-enter CLYTEMNESTRA.

CLY. Ye men of Argos, elders of our state,
I will not shame to tell before your face
My wifely love. The fear of man wears off
With time. My heart instructs me to declare
How, while your sovereign tarried before Troy,
My life was doleful. 'Tis no light distress
To sit at home forlorn, the man away,
Malignant rumours ever in one's ears,
One crying he came; another, he had brought
Dishonour, worse even than his death. Moreover,
Had he as many wounds as loose-tongued Fame
Gave forth, a net had fewer holes than he.
And had he died as often as 'twas said,
A second Geryon, with three bodies, he
Had donned a threefold mantle of earth,—I pass
The abyss of ground beneath him,—in each form
Dying once at least. Vexed by such wild reports,
I had often tied the noose above my head
Which others took perforce from off my neck.
Hence, too, Orestes is not here, our son,
The pledge of both our loves. Nay, marvel not!
Our kind ally and friend, Strophius in Phocis,
Keeps him in ward. 'Twas he admonished me
Of a twofold danger, thine beneath Troy-wall,

And of this Argive realm, lest popular fury
Upset the Council;—as mankind are apt,
When one is down, to trample him the more.
None can suspect a shallow pretext there.
As for my tears, they spouted till the fount
Ran dry, and kept no drop. But on my bed
Mine eyes were worn with watching, early and late,
Grieving because the fires of thy return
Were still unkindled. And amidst my dreams
The gnat's small peremptory tones would wake me,
While seeing more dangers than the time could hold
Assailing thee. But now those weary days
Are over, and I shout, exempt from care,
'Here stands the watch-dog of the fold; the mainstay
That saves the vessel; yea, the lofty pillar
That holds the roof from ground:—an only son
Returning to his father; or, to mariners,
Firm land appearing beyond hope, fair day
Seen after tempest; to the thirsty traveller,
A spring of running water 'mid the sand.
' escape from wretchedness is always joy.'
Such terms of greeting have I for my lord.
Let envy rest aloof, since in the past
We have borne much misery. But now, dear king,
Light from that car, not setting foot on earth,
Thou, that hast trodden down the strength of Troy!
Maidens, why tarry ye, that have command
To pave the floor of his path with cloth of grain?
Let there be made forthwith a purple road,
That, to complete the Day's surprise, great Justice
May lead him to his home.
For what remains,
Considerate thought, not giving way to slumber,
Shall order well whate'er the gods decree.
[*The female attendants prepare to lay the carpet*
AGAM. Daughter of Leda, guardian of my Hall,
Thy welcome, like mine absence, hath been long.
Yet praise that rightly squares with my desert
Must come to me from others. Furthermore,
Do not, I pray thee, like some eastern slave,

Meet me with loud and prostrate courtesies,
Nor with this woman-pleasing luxury
Of purple trappings, pluck down on my path
An eye of envy. To the gods alone
Such tribute should be paid. For mortal man
To trample on rich webs of varied hue
To me is a thing by no means void of fear.
I seek for human honours, not divine.
Fame needs no carpets nor embroidered wefts
Beneath her feet, to sound her note of praise
And modesty is Heaven's best gift. When one
Shall end a happy life in peace and joy,
Then celebrate his glory! By this rule
We still may live and prosper, safe from harm.

CLY. Come, tell me this, and hide not your true thought.

AGAM. With mind unaltered I will answer thee.

CLY. You might have vowed this in some hour of peril?

AGAM. I know it. None better. Prompt is that reply.

CLY. And what of Priam, were he conqueror now?

AGAM. He had paved his path with broideries, I believe.

CLY. Be not too sensitive to vulgar blame.

AGAM. The people's muttered verdict hath great power.

CLY. Who is not envied, never will be admired.

AGAM. Contentiousness in woman is not well.

CLY. Nay, but 'tis graceful when a victor yields.

AGAM. Is this a battle in which you care to win?

CLY. Come, let me triumph on the taker of Troy!

AGAM. If you must have it so, let some one loose
The shoe that like a slave supports my tread.
Lest, trampling o'er these royal dyes, some god
Smite me with envious glances from afar.
It awes me not a little thus to [illegible]
In luxury, walking on webs of price.

(His slippers [illegible]

So, that is settled. But receive, I pray

This stranger-woman kindly. Heaven still smiles
When power is used with gentleness. No mortal
Is willingly a captive, but this maid,
Of countless spoils the flower and crown, was given
To me by the army, and attends me home.
[*He descends, while* CASSANDRA *remains upon the car*
Now, since you have subdued me, I obey,
Thus pacing over purple to my hall.
CLY. Of purple, 'neath the inexhaustible sea,
Enough remains to garnish many a realm
With precious dye for raiment oft renewed.
We too, my monarch, by the help of Heaven,
Possess our share. No poverty is here!
I had vowed to trample many a gorgeous robe,
Had oracles enjoined it on our house,
In hope of bringing home this glorious head.
Our root was still i' the ground. But now return
The foliage, that gives shadow from the heat.
Thy coming is our warmth in winter time:
But at the season when Zeus turns the grape
From sour green sap to wine, 'tis shady and co
I' the palace, while its lord is walking there.
[*He g*
Zeus—thou fulfillest all—fulfil my prayer!
And take good heed of all thou doest herein!
[*Exit* CLYTEM

CHORUS.

What means this haunting Fear
Incessant hovering near
To scare my prescient heart with vague u
This hymn, unhired, unbidden, of bodings
Why may not Hope renewed
With bold belief of good
Regain her wonted seat in my dear brea
Away, dim dreams! Cease from your v
The time is past, when on the sandy co
moored, the ships their beauty

Ageing, or ere the host
Might reach their haven 'neath the walls of Troy.

Not by report I learn I 2
Our hero's home return.
Myself the eye-witness, I beheld him come.
Yet ne'ertheless my spirit doth inly burn,
And holding firm no more
Hope's confidence of yore,
Sings without lyre that self-taught strain of doom.
Not idly stir these inward monishings
Within the throbbing heart that beats on thought
Of judgement, with prophetic dreams distraught.
Yet may they come to nought,
And let my fears be unaccomplished things!

Great health is prone to end in boundless woe. II 1
Disease weighs hard on the thin partner-wall.
And when that neighbour hath looked in, we know
The man's full fortune but prepares his fall.
His ship in her fair course with sudden shock
Strikes on the viewless rock.
Even then, if caution from a timely sling
Some portion of his wealth to the ocean fling,
His vessel, lightened of her fateful load,
Shall save her timbers from the raging flood,
Her fabric shall not founder in the deep.
Heaven's ample gifts with the revolving years
Shall banish hunger with his brood of fears.
Full harvest from rich furrows they shall reap.

But once let blood of man drop to the ground II 2
Before his time, and darken all the sod,
What spell to call it upward shall be found?
What leech so wise? Though he were all but God
Who learned the secret of restoring breath
To mortals sunk in death,
Zeus put an end to that for evermore.
The bound is set, and none may pass it o'er.
Else ere the tongue could move, the heart should speak
Of the sore burden, that now bids her break,

As, darkly muttering her dim desire,
O'er-fraught with pain, she may not hope to unwind
The ravelled ponderings of her secret mind,
That inly burns as with consuming fire.

Re-enter CLYTEMNESTRA.

CLY. In with thee too, Cassandra! Get thee in!
Since Heaven in mercy hath consigned thee here
To share our household's lustral waters, one
Of many slaves that stand around our hearth.
Come from that carriage. Be not proud. Descend!
Have we not heard, Alcmena's offspring once
Was sold a slave and felt the galling yoke?
But when misfortune brings one to this pass,
'Tis no small boon to serve an ancient house;
Since they who have harvested beyond their hope
Make cruel masters and exceed the bound.
Thou hast such greeting as I use to a slave.
CHO. She hath said and thou hast heard. Her words are clear.
And now thou art in the fatal toils, perchance
Thou mayst obey her. But, methinks, thou art loth.
CLY. Well, if she be not, like the immigrant bird,
Possessor of a strange outlandish tongue,
My words must find their way and move her will.
CHO. (*to* CASS.) Go with her! What she sayeth is for the best,
As things are now. Come down, and leave that car
CLY. I have not time to waste out here with he
By this the victims at our midmost hearth
Stand ready for the slaughter and the fire;—
Rich thank-offerings for mercies long despaired.
Then, if thou wilt obey me, do it with speed.
But if thou wilt not understand nor speak,
Declare it with the gesture of thy race!
CHO. 'Twould seem she needs a clear interpret
Her ways are as of a creature newly caught.
CLY. Sure she is mad, and follows crazy though
Who, leaving her own city newly ta'en,
... hither, and hath not the sense to pace

In harness, till she foam away in blood
Her spirit upon the bit.
I'll not demean myself
By throwing more words away. [*Exit* CLYTEMNESTRA.
CHO. But I, unhappy one,
Will not be angry, for I feel for thee.
Come, leave that car deserted, yield to Fate,
And prove the unaccustomed yoke. Descend.

iss. (*from the car*). Ai, ai! O Apollo! Apollo!
io. Wherefore that cry to Phoebus? Not for him
voice of mourning.
ASS. Ai! Apollo! Apollo!
Ai! O Apollo!
HO. Again she summons with that sound of woe
god whose ears detest it.
'ASS. O my Apollo!
ilder! Destroyer!
ilder of Troy! Destroyer of me!
ce more thy heavy hand with ease hath ruined me.
CHO. Hark! She will prophesy of her despair.
captive, yet she holds the heavenly fire!
CASS. Apollo! Apollo!
oy-builder! Destroyer of me!
a! What is here? What roof? Whither hast thou
brought me?
CHO. The Atridae's palace. If thou know'st it not,
tell thee plainly; and thou wilt find it true.
CASS. Ah!
lay, but a hideous den, abhorred of Heaven;
built stained with strangled lives, with kinsmen's
blood;
A place of sprinkled gore, of clotted horror!
Ah! Faugh!
CHO. Her scent is keen, this stranger's! Like a
hound
She snuffs for blood. And she will find, I doubt me.
CASS. Yea! There, there, there! Here's evidence
enough!
Smell! Nay—I see, I hear them! Little children

And when I hear that word,
Thy plaintive notes strike me with cruel stings
Of pity and wonder for thy life of pain.

CASS. Troy, thou art fallen, never to rise. Thy woes
No sacrifice abated nor reprieved
Of all my father slew before the towers,
Poor herb-fed victims! Troy is fallen in fire;
And I, on fire, erelong shall fall in blood.

CHO. That strain agreeth to thy former words.
Some god of cruel mind
With mighty force impels thee to this dirge,
As if thy life were doomed. The end I know not.

CASS. No longer, like a newly married girl,
My word shall peep behind a veil, but, flashing
With panted vehemence to meet the day,
'Twill dash, against the shores of Light, a sorrow
Of mightier volume.
I will expound it. Mark me!
No riddling now! Bear witness if ye find me
Keen to discern or agile to pursue
The trail of long-past crime.
There bides within
A band of voices,—all in unison,
Yet neither sweet nor tuneful, for their song
Is not of blessing. Ay, a revel-rout,
Ever emboldened with new draughts of blood,
Within these walls, a furious multitude,
Hard to drive forth, keeps haunt, all of one kin.
They cling to the walls: they hymn the primal curse,
Their fatal hymn; then in due course they spurn
A brother's bed, by a hateful brother mounted.

Say, was that shaft well aimed? Or am I proved
No seer,—a forward babbler at the door?
Declare this on your oath: Have I, or not,
Learnt one old secret of this house of sin?

CHO. How should an oath, the noblest ever sworn,
Prove healing in this case?
Howbeit, I marvel,

Reared overseas, thou shouldst portray the state
Of a strange people, as thou hadst heard and seen.
  Cass. Prophet Apollo thus empowered my soul.
  Cho. Was he, although a god, smit with thy love?
  Cass. Time was, I had blushed to utter such a word.
  Cho. Well-being is daintier than adversity.
  Cass. Sweet was it when he wrestled for my heart.
  Cho. Came ye to close embraces, as men use?
  Cass. I *promised* Phoebus, but belied my troth.
  Cho. When fired already by the Spirit Divine?
  Cass. Already I foretold my country's woe.
  Cho. How couldst thou 'scape the wrath of Phoebus,
      then?
  Cass. No man believed me from that fatal hour.
  Cho. To us, methinks, thy words seem true.
  Cass. Oh! oh!
Alas! my misery!
Again the terrible whirlwind comes! the pain
Of Truth's deliverance, troubling all within me.

See! the beginning of sorrows! What are these
What dreamlike forms kneel on yon roof? Young boys,
As they'd been slain by those who should have loved
      them,
Holding a burden piteous to be borne,
Goblets of flesh, their very own, their entrails,
Clearly discernible,—the heart, the liver,
Of which their father ate!
      For this, I say,
Vengeance is plotted by a craven lion
That tumbled in the lordly monarch's lair
In his absence,—so kept house for *him*, alas!
My master. Once a captive, one must bear it!
He ruled the fleet, and razed the towers of Ilium,
But knows not what the monster woman dares;
What sequel to her garrulous speech and face
Of welcome, brightening as the [illegible] like Atè
Lurking in night,—she'll work with wicked speed.
The man-slaying woman! To what horrid form
Shall I compare her, and be true? To Scylla,

That raging mother of death, dwelling in rocks,
Now rending the poor mariner, but once
A pitiless curse to her own?—or Amphisbaena?

Heard ye her triumph? Even as warriors shout
Who turn the battle, so the woman cried,
Seeming to joy in his return from war.

Ye are still incredulous. It makes no difference.
What is to come, will come,—and soon. Thou, seeing.
Shalt pity, and say, 'Her soothsaying was too true!'

CHO. Thyestes' banquet of his children's flesh
I understood, and shuddered. Fear possessed me
To hear it truly given, each point observed.
But as I listened further, I was lost.

CASS. Agamemnon's death, I tell thee, thou shalt see.
CHO. Unhappy one! Speak no ill-omened word!
CASS. *This* time I summon not the god of healing!
CHO. Death has no healer. But be it far, I pray!
CASS. Ye pray, while others slay; or are about it.
CHO. What man can be the author of this woe?
CASS. What *man?* Far wide indeed that arrow flew!
CHO. Yea, for I cannot guess who is to do it.
CASS. And yet I have learnt too well the speech of Hellas.
CHO. So hath the Pythoness. Yet her words are dark.
CASS. Oh pain! What burning fire! It comes, it comes!
Lykian Apollo! Woe! me miserable!

This human lioness, couching with a wolf
While the noble lion was away, will kill
Me the unfortunate, a fair prize, to make
One more ingredient in her chalice of bane.
Sharpening her husband's death-knife, she declares
My death, too, shall requite his bringing me.
—Why wear I still these mockeries of my soul,
This wand, these fillets round my neck? I tear ye
Thus! Go to your destruction ere I die!
To pieces with you! Lead the way! I follow!
Enrich some other life with misery!

See! see! Apollo! he is stripping from me
This prophet-mantle.
Ay, thou didst visit me
Thine eye beheld me, even in these hallowed weeds,
Insulted, spurned, with those who loved me well,
By our enemies who swept in like a flood.
They called me beggar priestess, roving seer;
I bore it,—dying with hunger, poor, dismayed!
And now the [illegible], Prophet supreme,
Disrobing here his prophetess, conducts me
To this dark ending. [illegible] my father's altar,
What waits me [illegible]? The block, the bloody knife,
The hot last [illegible] that ends the sacrifice.
Yet shall we [illegible] unobserved of Heaven.
He lives, who shall avenge us. [illegible] he shall.
The mother-slaying [illegible] of his race
The mother [illegible]. From far
Redeemer of his [illegible]
The wanderer shall return, and put the cope
On these [illegible]. For the gods in Heaven
Have sworn a [illegible], his father's fall
Shall draw him from his alien dwelling place.
Why do I linger thus and mourn, since first
I saw my city's ruin, [illegible] again
Her captor, judged of the gods, receives this doom?
I will go forward! I will dare to die!
Hail, then, thou gate of Hell!
But first, one prayer!
Oh, grant me, all ye gods! a mortal wound!
That with no struggling, while the deathful stream
Flows painlessly away, these eyes may close!
Cho. Deep-thoughted, deeply suffering maid, thy words
Have far extended. If thou know'st thy doom
For certain, how [illegible] god-driven victim,
Walk boldly toward the altar of thy death?
Cass. It may not be avoided. 'Tis the hour!
Cho. But every [illegible] has some worth.
Cass. The time is come. [illegible] were flight to me.
Cho. A bold heart [illegible] thy bitter woe.
Cass. None but the wretched hear such benison.

Cho. Yet mortal life is graced by a noble death.
Cass. Woe for thee, father, and thy noble sons!
[She is approaching the palace-gate—then turns away.
Cho. What terror turns thee backward from the gate?
Cass. Ah woe!
Cho. What's thine abhorrence? or why criest thou thus?
Cass. These halls exhale with murder! drip with death!
Cho. 'Tis but the reek of household sacrifice.
Cass. 'Tis like a charnel-room. It steams with gore.
Cho. Other than Syrian perfume find'st thou, then?
Cass. Nay, I will go within, and there bewail
amemnon's fate and mine. I have done with life!

strangers! friends!
hrink not idly, like some timorous bird
fore a bush! Bear record in that day
ien I am dead, and for this woman slain
woman's life is taken, and, for the man
iose wife was naught, a man shall meet his doom.
hear my last request before I die.
Cho. Poor maid! We pity thy prophetic fall.
Cass. Once more I would speak, not now with tears, but firmly,
uching myself. To thee, O Sun, I pray,
oking my last on thee, that when the Hour
here, and vengeance tarries not, I, too,
aptive prey,—soon quelled,—may be avenged. *[Exit.*
Cho. Ah! What is mortal life? When prosperous,
shadow can o'erturn it, and, when fallen,
throw o' the wet sponge blurs the picture out.
is is more piteous than the ruin of pride.

ho hath e'er been content with his triumph, or spoken to Fortune this word,
While men point with the finger of envy at halls he hath reared for his pride,—
'Tis enough! Come not hither again!'
this king the immortals have given to vanquish the glory of Troy,

And, favoured of Heaven, with honour he comes from the war to his home.
But if now to requite ancient murders he die in the midst of his joy,
Who shall boast to be free from disaster?

AGAM. (within). Ah! Ah! I am mortally stricken, here, in the palace!

CHO. 1. Hush! Who cries that he is wounded, stricken with a mortal stroke?

AGAM. Oh me! Again I am smitten, to the death!

CHO. 1. It was the king. That groan concluded all.
'Tis finished! Let us join safe counsels here.

CHO. 2. Then, hear my judgement. Sound we an alarm,
And draw the city to the palace-gate!

CHO. 3. Nay, let us break within immediately,
And prove the fact before the knife be cold.

CHO. 4. That likes me better. Let us act, say I,
In some way. 'Tis no time for long debate.

CHO. 5. One may see plainly, when such signs appear,
Treason and tyranny are near at hand.

CHO. 6. Ay, we lose time, whilst others are in act
And triumph o'er our solemn feebleness.

CHO. 7. I know not what to say. To advise is hard,
Since counsel is forestalled by action here.

CHO. 8. Hard, say you! So think I! 'Twere hard, I trow,
With reasoned words to raise the dead to life.

CHO. 9. Then must we all our days be over-awed
To their subjection who have stained the throne?

CHO. 10. To die were more endurable than so.
Death is a milder doom than tyranny.

CHO. 11. Are we diviners, to conclude from groans
He, that so cried, fell with a mortal stroke?

CHO. 12. Let 's talk no more of this until we know.
Barren conjecture is a treacherous guide.

LEADER OF CHO. The sum of all your counsels, then, is this:

That we make certain how it goes with the king.
[They are approaching the gate, when CLYTEMNESTRA *is discovered with the dead body of* AGAMEMNON *enveloped in the embroidered web.*

CLY. I, who spake much before to serve my need,
Will here unspeak it,—unappalled by shame.
How else prepare the hostile net to slay
ne's foe, supposed one's friend, and fence it high
eyond o'erleaping?—Time, and thought still brooding
n that old quarrel, brought me to this blow.
'is done, and here I stand: here where I smote him!—
so contrived it,—that I'll ne'er deny,—
s neither loophole nor defence was left him.
had set round, like a stake-net for fish,
labyrinth of hangings, with no outlet,
limb-embarrassing wealth of woven folds.
smote him, twice: and with the second groan
e sank: and when he had fallen, I gave a third
ast stroke, to crown the sacrifice, and grace
uto, preserver of the dead. Even then,
is soul on wing for Hades, his keen breath
mote me with drops of slaughter, whose dark dew
efreshed my spirit, even as the bladed corn
hat swells to the ear, delighteth in heaven's rain.
ich—oh ye Argive elders who stand here,—
ich is the fact. Whereat, an if ye will,
ejoice ye! Howsoe'er, it is my boast.
ea, were libation meet o'er human victim,
ere 'twere most righteous. Such a cup of death
e filled with household crime, and now, returning,
as drained in retribution.

CHO. Wondrous bold
f tongue art thou, to boast thus o'er thy lord!

CLY. Presume ye, as though my thoughts were womanish?
dare your wisdoms. Ye know all, and—blame me
r praise,—'tis one to me. This corpse, I tell you,
Agamemnon, once my lord;—his death
he work of this right hand, proud to have wrought
masterpiece so righteous. Ay, 'tis true.

Ch. Woman, what evil food 1
From either element, of earth or sea,
Solid or liquid, mingling with thy blood
Hath prompted thee
To kill such sacrifice, and then
Fling back from thee the muttered curse of men?
Hast thou cut him off? Thou shalt be cut off from the state;
Our citizens shall hate thee with firm hate.

Cly. That is your sentence. I must fly the land
With public execration on my head.
Wise justicers! what said ye, then, to him
Who slew his child, nor recked of her dear blood
More than if sacrificing some ewe-lamb
From countless flocks that choked the teeming fold,
But slew the priceless travail of my womb
For a charm, to allay the wind from Thrace? How say you?
Should he not have been banished by your voice
To purge the state? Yet, hearing of my deed,
Ye are swift and harsh in judgement. Threaten, then,
Even as ye list; but on us, being assured,
That force must win the day. If so ye will,
I yield. But if Zeus give my plans success,—
And they are deeply laid,—you shall be taught,
Old as ye are, to learn the path of peace.

Ch. Haughty thy mien, and proud 2
Thy vaunting. But as thine infuriate soul
Inflamed with murder, in defiance loud
Contemns control,
While blood-spot is in thine eyes,
Intoxicate with impious butchery,—
Unavenged, with no lover at hand, in thy Destiny's day,
With blow for blow the forfeit thou shalt pay.

Cly. Say you? Then hear mine oath. By mighty Justice,

Final avenger of my murdered child,
By Atè and Erinys, gods of power,
To whom I sacrificed this man, I look not
For danger as an inmate, whiles our hearth
Is lightened by Aegisthus, evermore,
As hitherto, constant in love to me;
My shield, my courage! He is fallen, who shamed me
In dalliance with Chryseïs and the rest
Before the Trojan wall. Ay, and that other,
His prophet-mistress, his oracular love,
His captive-conqueress, that shared his bed
On shore, his bench i' the ship:—she too now lies
In death. They have full recompense. You see
His fortune—as for her, she tuned her lay
Most swanlike for her end, wailing their doom.
So died the damsel this man brought to lend
New savour to the softness of my bed.

Cho. O for some speedy stroke, I 1
Not of sharp agony nor lingering pain,
To bring on us the unawakening sleep!
Since he, our gentlest guardian, is subdued,
And through a woman's guilt.—A woman slew him!
Infatuate Helen, who alone didst send
So many souls to Hades before Troy!
A life worth all the rest thy sister's deed
Hath quenched in darkness. From one little seed
Is grown a strong and ever-spreading tree
Of man-destroying strife and misery.

Cly. Pray not for your death, overburdened with what hath been done;
Neither turn your displeasure on Helen, of Hellas the bane,
Who sped many souls to destruction and caused unendurable pain!

Cho. O demon of the home, I 2
That with alternate violence doth fall
On either branch of Pelops' ancient line,
Thou to my bitter sorrow wieldest here

Man-braving boldness in a woman's mind.
Like hateful raven, o'er her husband's corse
She stands and croaks at us, in accents hoarse,
Her proudly inharmonious funeral hymn.

. . . . . .

CLY. At length there is truth on your lips. Ye name rightly the Fiend overgrown
Whose seed in this mansion was sown.
'Tis of him that the blood-lapping lust at its core hath been nursed.
Ere the grief from old wounds hath abated, fresh fountains of bloodshed are burst.

CHO. Mighty and fell of wrath II 1
Declar'st thou then the Genius of the race;
Recalling a disastrous history
Of dire offences irremediable
And endless. Zeus the cause:—for what in man
Eludes the author of the Eternal Plan?

Oh king, my king, how shall I weep for thee?
What words of affection shall flow from my heart!
Thou art there in that web of the spider, dishonoured in death,
Oh horror! oh murderous guile!
Dishonoured, and cleft with the sword,
The warm life yet running from thee!

CLY. Ye proclaim it my deed. Yet beware!
Say not I was wife to the king.
'Tis the spirit of Vengeance awaking from sleep
For the banquet by Atreus of old to Thyestes cruelly given,
Putting on the resemblance of her that was queen to the dead,
That hath visited all upon him,
And hath sternly repaid a grown victim for little ones slain.

CHO. That this is not thy work II 2
Who will bear witness? The offence is thine,
Whatever spirit of hoarded recompense

Final avenger of my murdered child,
By Atè and Erinys, gods of power,
To whom I sacrificed this man, I look not
For danger as an inmate, whiles our hearth
Is lightened by Aegisthus, evermore,
As hitherto, constant in love to me;
My shield, my courage! He is fallen, who shamed me
In dalliance with Chryseïs and the rest
Before the Trojan wall. Ay, and that other,
His prophet-mistress, his oracular love,
His captive-conqueress, that shared his bed
On shore, his bench i' the ship:—she too now lies
In death. They have full recompense. You see
His fortune—as for her, she tuned her lay
Most swanlike for her end, wailing their doom.
So died the damsel this man brought to lend
New savour to the softness of my bed.

Cho. O for some speedy stroke, 11
Not of sharp agony nor lingering pain,
To bring on us the unawakening sleep!
Since he, our gentlest guardian, is subdued,
And through a woman's guilt.—A woman slew him!
Infatuate Helen, who alone didst send
So many souls to Hades before Troy!
A life worth all the rest thy sister's deed
Hath quenched in darkness. From one little seed
Is grown a strong and ever-spreading tree
Of man-destroying strife and misery.

Cly. Pray not for your death, overburdened with what hath been done:
Neither turn your displeasure on Helen, of Hellas the bane,
Who sped many souls to destruction and caused unendurable pain!

Cho. O demon of the home, 12
That with alternate violence doth fall
On either branch of Pelops' ancient line,
Thou to my bitter sorrow wieldest here

Man-braving boldness in a woman's mind,
Like hateful raven, o'er her husband's corse
She stands and croaks at us, in accents hoarse,
Her proudly inharmonious funeral hymn.

. . . . . .

CLY. At length there is truth on your lips. Ye name rightly the Fiend overgrown
Whose seed in this mansion was sown.
'Tis of him that the blood-lapping lust at its core hath been nursed.
Ere the grief from old wounds hath abated, fresh fountains of bloodshed are burst.

CHO. Mighty and fell of wrath II 1
Declar'st thou then the Genius of the race;
Recalling a disastrous history
Of dire offences irremediable
And endless. Zeus the cause;—for what in man
Eludes the author of the Eternal Plan?

Oh king, my king, how shall I weep for thee?
What words of affection shall flow from my heart?
Thou art there in that web of the spider, dishonoured in death,
Oh horror! oh murderous guile!
Dishonoured, and cleft with the sword,
The warm life yet running from thee!

CLY. Ye proclaim it my deed. Yet beware!
Say not I was wife to the king.
'Tis the spirit of Vengeance awaking from sleep
For the banquet by Atreus of old to Thyestes cruelly given,
Putting on the resemblance of her that was queen to the dead,
That hath visited all *upon him*,
And hath sternly repaid a grown victim for little ones slain.

Cho. That this is not thy work II 2
Who will bear witness? The offence is thine,
Whatever spirit of hoarded recompense

From elder ages may have wrought with thee.
Not yet accomplished is the course of strife,
The clotted guilt of infant gore yet cries
For kindred streams of bloody sacrifice,
All from one source, life rendered still for life.

Oh king, my king, how shall I weep for thee?
What words of affection shall flow from my heart?
Thou art there in that web of the spider, dishonoured in death,
Oh horror! oh murderous guile!
Dishonoured, and cleft with the sword,
The warm life yet running from thee!

CLY. Prate not of dishonour! 'Deserving' were rather the word. III
Had *he* not prepared for his house an encumbrance of woe?
Let him not loudly plead there below
That in paying the price of her death whom a nation deplored,
The branch I had reared from his loins, he is slain with iniquitous sword.
Men shall reap what they sow!

CHO. I am baffled and amazed, and know not whither
To turn me now the house begins to totter
Lashed with red rain, that saps it to the fall.
I fear it! This is no mere drizzling shower.
Fate now is whetting Justice' heavy sword
On a new whetstone, for fresh deeds of harm.

O Earth, Earth! would thou hadst covered me,
Ere I saw in his low-lying bed,
'Twixt the sides of yon bath-tub of silver, the king whom I love!

Who shall bury his corpse, who lament him?
Wilt *thou* have the heart,
Having slain thine own husband, to peal forth his dirge
And atone with light breath for the heavy offence thou hast done?

Ah, who shall be found to repeat for the man now
divine
The due praise o'er his grave, pouring tears with each
word sorely wrung
By deep thought from the truth of his soul?
CLY. Have no care. 'Tis not yours to provide. I will
bury the man whom I slew.
No train from the palace shall wail round his bier. But
his daughter, to yield him his due,
Running forward to welcome her sire at the quickly
passed ford of the dead,—
His Iphianassa,—shall open her arms and shall cling,
With a kiss, to the king!

CHO. Reproaches cross. The battle is hard to judge.
Robber is robbed, slayer slain. Revenge is sure.
Firm stands, while Zeus remains upon his throne,
One law, 'Who doeth shall suffer.' Who may cast
The brood of curses from yon roof? The race
Is joined and welded to calamity.
CLY. Therein thou hast prophesied aright. But I
Here make my compact with the hellish Power
That haunts the house of Atreus. What has been,
Though hard, we will endure. But let him leave
This roof, and plague some other race henceforth
With kindred-harrowing strife. Small share of wealth
Shall amply serve, now I have made an end
Of mutual-murdering madness in this hall.

Enter AEGISTHUS.

AEG. Sweet day of recompense, I hail thy light!
Now, lords of yon wide heaven, I recognize
Your jurisdiction o'er the griefs of men,
When I behold this man, to my great joy,
Laid in yon shroud of the Erinyes,
So punished for his father's act of guile.
Atreus his father, ruling the Argive land,
But challenged of his right, to tell it plainly,
By his *own* brother and *my* sire, Thyestes,
Drave him an exile from his country and home.

ARG. Come, I dare the death in combat for mine empire o'er the land.

CHO. Death!' that word is right: I embrace it. Fortune, let the omen stand!

CLY. Dearest one, let strife have ending. Add not to the heap of ill:
As it is, of troublous labour we are doomed to reap our fill.
Woes enow are here already; let not blood o'erpass the bound.
Back, ye dotards; know your places! Run in your appointed round,
Lest ye rue the deeds ye ponder; let your rude contention cease!

Might but this be all of sorrow, we would bargain now for peace,
Harassed by the heavy heel of God that trampled on our lot.
So resolves my woman's wisdom, whether men give heed or not.

ARG. Can I bear that these should idly from submission break away,
Flaunting proud rebellious phrases in defiance of my sway,
Holding light the Power that guides us as our Providence to-day?

CHO. Men of Argos ne'er will cringe in homage to a man of crime.

ARG. You shall yet repent that language, visited in aftertime.

CHO. Not if God direct Orestes homeward for his people's good.

ARG. Well I know that men in exile make of Hope their daily food.

CHO. Do thy worst! Grow fat, polluting Justice. It is now thine hour.

ARG. Know that one day for this folly thou shalt answer to my power.

CHO. Boast thee without fear exulting, like a cock beside the hen!

CLY. Care not for the idle yelpings of these old and feeble men.
I and thou together ruling with a firm and even hand
Will control and keep in order both the palace and the land.

THE CHOEPHOROE

OR

LIBATION-BEARERS

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA

ORESTES.
PYLADES.
CHORUS *of Trojan Captives.*
ELECTRA.
The Nurse of ORESTES.
CLYTEMNESTRA.
AEGISTHUS.
A Porter.
An Attendant.

SCENE—(1) Before the tombs of the Pelopidae. T tomb of Agamemnon and a bust of Hermes are in t foreground. (2) Afterwards, before the palace of t Pelopidae.

TIME—About ten years after the death of Agamemnc

AFTER the murder of Agamemnon Aegisthus and Clytemnestra have been reigning for some years at Argos. The people are discontented, but on the whole submissive. Menelaus is still absent. The only friends of Agamemnon in the Palace are (1) *Electra*, whom her mother treats as a slave; (2) the Trojan captive women whom he had brought home with Cassandra (these form the *Chorus* of the Choephoroe); and (3) the *Nurse* of Orestes, who is retained as one of the household. Orestes is now grown to manhood, and, impelled by the oracle of Delphi, returns from Phocis, with his friend Pylades, to execute vengeance on the murderers of his father. Electra and the Trojan women have been sent by Clytemnestra with an offering to the shade of Agamemnon, who is more likely to be propitious to them than to his murderess,—in consequence of an alarming vision, in which the Queen has dreamt of giving birth to a serpent, and taking it to her breast. Electra pours the libation with very different prayers from those intended by Clytemnestra,—above all for her brother's return; whereupon Orestes reveals himself, and declares his purpose. He is urged to the fulfilment of it by Electra and by the Trojan women, who join with him in a solemn and earnest appeal to the soul of the dead to assist his avengers.

Orestes then approaches the palace-gate. The gatekeeper at length opens to him, and Clytemnestra comes forth. Orestes in disguise reports his own death. His mother receives the news with well-feigned grief: but gives a good reception to the supposed messenger. They go into the Palace: Clytemnestra to her own apartments, Orestes and Pylades to the guest-chambers.

Aegisthus, summoned by the Nurse, arrives from out of doors, and follows them. Shortly afterwards, his death-shriek is heard. Clytemnestra is called in haste from the women's apartments, and at once realizes the truth. She cries out for an axe, but before it is brought, Orestes is discovered, with the corpse of Aegisthus beside him. Clytemnestra wails over the death of her lover. This

rouses the fury of Orestes. But his mother uncovers her breast, and appeals to that sacred symbol of maternity. The son is for a moment shaken. But Pylades (who speaks only here) recalls to his friend's mind the oracle of Apollo. From this point, pleading and menace are alike in vain. In her extremity, the courage of Clytemnestra rises to its former height, and she threatens Orestes with the furies that wait on matricide. The dreadful act is accomplished within the Palace, and the Chorus utter a strain of mingled sadness and joy—in which, however, joy is predominant. But a change is at hand. Orestes is again discovered, with the dead bodies of both his victims, and vindicates his action by displaying the fatal garment in which Agamemnon had been slain. In the midst of his self-defence, however, his mind falters, and, when he has declared his purpose of going to Delphi for purgation, he sees the Erinyes advancing towards him, and he flees forth as pursued by them.

THE CHOEPHOROE

OR

LIBATION-BEARERS

ORESTES (*with* PYLADES).

ORESTES. O Hermes of the Shades, that watchest over
My buried father's right, be now mine aid.
I come from exile to this land. Oh save me!

. . . .

Father, here standing at thy tomb, I bid thee
Hear me! Oh, hear!
[*He lays two locks of hair on the grave.*

. . . .

One lock for Inachus,
Whose waters nursed my growing life; and one
In mourning for the dead. . . .
Father, I was not here to wail thy death.
I stretched no hand of farewell to thy bier.

. . . .

Soft! What are these? I see a company
Of women, whose dark raiment should portend
Some wintry mission. What can be the cause?
Is some new sorrow fallen upon the house?
Or may I trust my mind's presage, that these
Are laden with drink-offerings for my sire,
Such as appease the wrath of powers below?
It must be so. For look! Electra there,
Distinguished by deep grief, comes slowly on;
My sister! Zeus! grant me to wreak the death
Of my great father: give me gracious aid!
Dear Pylades, let us withdraw, and mark
What means this female supplication here.
[*They retire.*

Enter ELECTRA: *after her the* CHORUS.

CHORUS.

In haste from yonder halls we are sped I 1
Bearing libation for the dead.
My head resounds with many a blow,
And on my cheek the crimson glow
Doth shine, that hands have printed fresh
With furrowing nails on tender flesh.
(Groans are my spirit's lifelong food,
By haunting sorrow still renewed.)
These modest folds that shroud my breast I tear
With deafening noise that echoes my despair,
Rending the flaxen woof,
Because the palace-roof
Knows one more stroke to-day
Of laughterless dismay.

A dream-born cry at dead of night, I 2
Stiffening the hair with wild affright,
Fierce rushing with tempestuous blast
Throughout the women's chamber passed.
Bursting from out the inmost room,
It scattered sleep, it pierced the gloom:
A prophet dread was the dire dream
That in the house raised that fell scream.
And when the dream-interpreters were found,
They cried aloud, by heavenly sureties bound,—
'One rages there beneath
Menacing death for death.
He never will forgive
His slayers, die they, or live.'

Hence the unblest mission for averting bane II 1
The godless woman sends me to sustain.
O holiest Earth, she is eager! But I fear
To broach this word for divine ears to hear.

What gifts can stay the rod,
When blood hath stained the sod?

[Here they point to the palace.

O home of despair, undermined to thy fall
By a hate long engendered in freeman and thrall,
What horror enshrouds thee! It blots out the sun.
Sorrow reigns. Joy is done!
Gross darkness envelops the mansion, abhorred
For the death of its lord.

The majesty that once subdued this folk II 2
In speechless awe beneath the unquestioned yoke,
With listening ear and humbled heart, is gone!
Trembling hath seized on Argos' ancient throne!

Where Fortune makes abode,
There is the people's god!

But Justice her balance is holding above:
She will visit for sin, whether slowly she move,
Or swift;—noon or evening, what matters the hour?
Whether twilight have power,
Or night have come down ere the doom be declared,
Not a soul shall be spared.

Blood is decreed (as if with iron pen III 1
'Twere graven on brass) to atone for blood of men,
Deep Earth once drank and shall not lose again.
Sorrow shall tear his heart who made to flow
That bitter fount of still upswelling woe.

He who hath once unsealed the virgin bower, III 2
Can ne'er undo his deed: nor shall the power
Of all Earth's rivers, in one flood, restore
To purity the hand once tinged with gore!

LEADER OF CHO. But helpless is my lot. The gods let down IV
A cruel net round all our town,
And I was borne, far from my father's hall,
Where I, a foreign thrall,
Must pass my life obedient to the sway
Of powers that reign to-day.
Just or perverse, their bidding must be done.

Howe'er my heart reluctant groan
With hatred of their violent will,
My passion must be still.
But shivering sobs within my garments' fold
Mourn secretly the righteous cause grown cold,
Of him, my lord of old.

El. Ministrant women, orderers of the house,
Since ye move with me to this suppliant rite,
Be ye my counsellors, how I must perform it.
When I shall pour this tribute at the grave,
What words will be in tune, what prayer will please?
Shall I say, Father, from a loving wife
This comes to thy dear soul: yea, from my mother?
That dare I not.—I know not how to speak,
Shedding this draught upon my father's tomb.
Or shall I say, as mortals use, Give back
The giver meet return? to wit, some evil?
Or in dishonoured silence, as he fell,
Shall I give Earth to drink of this, and go,
Like one who carries offal forth and jerks
The jar behind with unregarding eye?
Be sharers of this counsel, dear my friends!
We bear a common hatred in the hall.
Hide not your thoughts within for fear of any.
Since Destiny holds in her iron grasp
Sovereign and slave alike. Be kind, and speak.

Cho. Yea, from the heart we will speak. Thy father's tomb
With sacred awe constrains us to thy will.

El. Speak, as ye fear my father's resting-place!

Cho. So pray that friends may hear with reverent heed.

El. What friends? Who are they that should care to hear?

Cho. Thyself, and whoso hates Aegisthus' sway.

El. My prayer extends, then, to myself and you?

Cho. Let thine own heart consider, and declare.

El. What other should I rank upon our side?

Cho. Think of Orestes, though he be not here.

El. Well said and wisely! That most heartens me.

HO. Then think of those who shed this blood, and pray—
L. How? Teach me; I am ignorant. Speak on.
HO. Some power, divine or human, may descend—
L. To judge or execute? What wilt thou say?
HO. Few words, but clear: To kill the murderer.
L. But will the gods not frown upon such prayer?
HO. Do they not favour vengeance on a foe?
L. O mightiest herald both in Heaven and Hell,
ist me, Hermes of the shades, and tell me
prayer is heard by tho-e beneath the ground,
Powers that keep watch o'er my father's home,
l by great Earth, who teems with all, and feeds them,
l takes them back for seed to her own womb.
, pouring this lustration for the dead,
ak thus appealingly: My father, pity
y child, and let Orestes be brought home.
: now we are lost, your dear ones: sold, disowned,
her that bare us; who has ta'en for husband
gisthus, thy part murderer, in thy room.
m no better than a slave; Orestes
banished from his wealth; and o'er thy woe
y gloat in luxury and towering pride.
en, father, hear my prayer, that to this land
estes come with Fortune leading him.
d for myself, grant me a better mind
in e'er my mother had, and hands more pure.
is prayer is for thy children: on thy foes
thine avenger rise with recompense,
make the murderers pay thee death for deat
is curse must mar my perfect prayer): O fat
d us from where thou liest some boon above
th Heaven and Earth and conquering Right for
ch prayers doth this libation crown.—Now yo
orn with wailing dirge the solemn rite,
d hymn the dead with customary cry.

[*As the following lines are chanted,* ELECTRA p*
three several libations. In doing so, she
serves the lock of hair, and takes it up.

CHO. Wail ye! let the tear down flow
For the lord that here lies low.
Sound his dirge before the hill,
That fends alike haps good and ill.
May the curse our hearts abhor,
May the portent we deplore,
Be averted by the power
Of the soft libation's shower!
Hear us, master, ever kind,
Hear us in thy darkened mind!

—Woe for us and woe for thee, [*To* ELECTRA.
Child of cureless misery!

Where is he that was to come
And redeem the royal home?
—Mighty spearman, with strong hand
Closed on the descending brand!
From his bow of Scythian bend
Swift the War-god's shaft to send!
Holding firm, in act to kill,
Bow and brand and dauntless will!

EL. Earth now has drained that offering to my sire.
But here,—what think ye? There is more to tell.

CHO. Speak on! My heart is bounding with new fear.

EL. Look what I have found: this curl upon the tomb!

CHO. Shorn by what man, or what long-kirtled maid?

EL. No mystery there! Whoever sees may know.

CHO. Old as I am, youth must enlighten me.

EL. One man alone could shear it from his brow!

CHO. They who in blood should mourn for him are foes.

EL. Well, here is a resemblance not obscure!
[*Holding the lock to her own head.*

CHO. Tell us. What crispèd locks wouldst thou compare?

EL. His and my own. 'Tis a strong likeness, women!

CHO. Can this, then, be Orestes' secret gift?

El. Methinks I see this curl upon his head.
Cho. But how should he have ventured to come
hither?
El. Ay.
Perchance he hath sent this tribute to his sire.
Cho. I find no less occasion for my tears,
If on this land he ne'er shall plant his foot.
El. Yea: on my heart the bitter waves of grief
Strike hard: I faint, as from a staggering blow;
And from mine eyes a wintry flood comes down
Of drops that slake not sorrow, since I saw
This hair. Whom else in Argos can I think of
With locks of equal sheen? nor was it shorn
By her that slew the king; mother to me
word; but in her mind, towards her own offspring,
er Heaven-offending thoughts have no such name.
may not yield an absolute belief
hat this fair offering came from the head
Of my most dear Orestes: but the hope
Thrills through me. Ah! could it but speak, and tell
me
Kind news, I were not shaken thus and cloven,
Thinking two ways: but either with clear scorn
I would renounce it, as an enemy's hair;
Or being my brother's, it should mourn with me,
And pay sweet honours at our father's tomb.
I call the gods to witness, for they know,
Amidst what troubles we, like mariners,
Are toiling; yet, if Fate intend our good,
A little seed may bear a mighty stem.
See, see! a second proof! The footmarks here
Are like and comparable to mine!—What else?
Why, there are two of them, two printed forms,
His own, no doubt! and some companion's tread.
Measuring the heel and foot palm's pressure, see!
The print accords with what my steps have made.
—Yet am I pained. My heart is sore distraught!
Or. (*coming forward*). First tell the gods thy form
prayer is heard.
Then pray that all to come be likewise good.

El. Why? What hath Heaven performed for me but now?
Or. Thou seest at last whom long thou hast prayed to see.
El. Whom knowest thou that my prayers were summoning?
Or. Orestes' name lives in thy mouth, I know.
El. Thou saidst my prayer was heard. What couldst thou mean?
Or. I am the man. Look not for one more dear.
El. O stranger, art thou weaving me some guile?
Or. If so, I weave a snare for my own feet.
El. Nay, thou'lt make mockery of my miseries.
Or. I mock mine own, if I mock thine at all.
El. Shall I, in very truth, call thee Orestes?
Or. You see myself, and find it hard to know me.
Yet when you spied yon severed mourning hair,
And keenly tracked my footsteps, your fond heart
Was lifted to believe you saw my shape.
Set close that curl to this my head, and, look!
The place receives it. 'Tis thy brother's hair.
And see this robe which thine own hand once made,
The firm woof and the broidered figures here!
—Nay, be not lost in gladness! Curb thy heart:
We know, our nearest friends are dangerous foes.
El. Centre of fondness in thy father's hall,
Tear-watered hope of blessings yet to be,
Faith in thy might shall win thee back thy home!
Oh how I joy beholding thee! Thou hast
Four parts in my desires, not one alone.
I call thee Father: and my mother's claim
Falls to thy side, since utter hate is hers.
And my poor butchered sister's share is thine.
And I adore thee as my own true brother.
But oh! may holy Right and Victory,
And highest Zeus, the Saviour, speed thee too!
Or. Zeus! Zeus! be thou beholder of this act!
Look down upon thine eagle's orphan brood
Whose sire was strangled in the twisted coils
Of the fell serpent.—They in orphanhood

Famish with hunger: for their youthful wing
Bears not to the eyrie the paternal prey.
Even so we twain this day, I and Electra,
Stand in thy sight bereaved and fatherless,
Both alike banished from the rights of home.
But if these nestlings of a pious sire,
Who made thy glory great with sacrifices,
Be left by thee to perish, whence again
Shalt thou be feasted with so full a hand?
As, if thou let thine eagle's offspring die,
The tokens that revive men's faith, would fail;
So, if thou leave to wither this proud stem
Of topmost sovereignty, thine altar's crown
Shall miss much blood when bulls are slaughterèd.
Care for us, and a mighty house will rise
From this low state of ruined majesty.
 Cho. Children, redeemers of your father's hearth,
Speak softly, dear ones, lest your words be known,
And some with idle tongue report all this
To those now ruling. Whom may I erelong
See dead amid dark wreaths of blackening fire!
 Or. We shall not fail: Apollo's mighty word
Will be performed, that bade me stem this peril.
High rose that sovran voice, and clearly spake
Of stormy curses that should freeze my blood,
Should I not wreak my father's wrongful death.
He bade me pay them back the self-same deed
Maddened by loss of all: yea, mine own soul
Should know much bitterness, were this not done.
For, so he prophesied, this land should yield
Such produce as should gladden every foe;
Whilst on us twain diseases should ascend,
Cankering our flesh with cruel sores all over,
Devouring what was comely, till grey hairs
Should find us, blasted with such misery.
And other onsets of the Erinys-power
He said should follow from my father's death
If unavenged by me.—For one so slain
Sees clearly, though his brows in darkness
The darkling arrow of the dead, that flies

From kindred souls abominably slain,
And madness and vain terror of the mind
Should harass and unman me, till the State
Should drive me forth, with brands upon my body.
So vexed, so banished, I should have no share
Of wine or dear libation, but, unseen,
My father's wrath should drive me from all altars.
None should receive me: none should dwell with me;
And my long friendless life, bereft of honours,
Should shrivel down to darkness and decay.
And was not this a word to be obeyed?
Yea, were it not, the deed must yet be done.
Many desires are joined in one strong will,—
The heavenly oracle; my heart's deep grief
For my dead father; yea, the stings of want,
Press all one way, forbidding that a race
The most renowned on earth, whose dauntless spirit
Razed the proud towers of Troy,—these Argive men—
Should be the vassals of a brace of women.
Is he not woman-souled? This day shall prove.

[ORESTES *and* ELECTRA *draw nearer to the grave.*

CHO. O mighty Fates, let Heaven's high sovereign send
The event that Justice chooseth for her end!
She cries aloud, requiring payment due,
'*The bitter tongue through bitter speech shall rue,*
Let bloody stroke for bloody stroke be law,
The doer must suffer.' 'Tis a world-old saw.

OR. Father, no word of mine, no deed, may bring I 1
Light to the darkness where thou liest below:—
Yet shall the dirge lament thy matchless woe,
And grace the tomb of Argos' noblest king.

CHO. Dear youth, the spirit of the dead survives
The ravening flame: his wrath long after lives.
His dying groan is answered from afar
By fierce avengers arming them for war.
When the sire falls, true grief is vastly stirred:
Shrinks from no toil; is from no task deterred.

EL. Hear me, too, father, mourning in my turn; I 2
Both thine afflicted ones toward thee yearn,

Both outcast, both sad suppliants at thy tomb.
What dawn may pierce this overwhelming gloom?
Cho. Ay, but even yet may Heaven to yonder hall
Glad voices of far differing tone recall.
So He but will, funereal notes shall end,
And hymns of happy triumph shall attend
The fresh home-coming of the royal friend.

II 1

Or. Would that some Lykian hand,
Father, had pierced thee in the Trojan land!
Then, leaving glory to thy home,
Laying in store for years to come
Bright example for thy seed,
Full of deep strength for all their need,
Thou hadst died before the wall;
And thy body there had found
Rest beneath a lofty mound,
Lightly [illegible]
Cho. Dear to great souls [illegible] encountered
Death [illegible] darkling throne,
Worshipped [illegible] beneath,
Chief in the [illegible] thou here hadst
Thou shouldst have [illegible]
known
For in thy time on earth thou wast a king,
With sceptred arm [illegible]

II 2

El. Not by S[illegible]
Amidst the crowd [illegible] by the sword,
Shouldst thou [illegible]
Nay, rather [illegible]
Thy murder[illegible]
A far-off [illegible]
As of [illegible]
Listening [illegible]
With a heart [illegible]
Free from [illegible] power
Cho. Daughter, [illegible]
speech,
Of fortune above gold, beyond the [illegible]

Of men most blest, in climes that poets know.
Meanwhile descends this twofold lash of woe.
With harsh reverberation: Help is there!
[Pointing to the tomb.
Buried beneath; and yonder hateful pair
[Pointing to the palace.
Usurp it o'er your hall with hands impure.
The living have the hardest lot to endure!

OR. That, like a dart, III 1
Pierces with maddening smart!
Zeus, thou that sendest from below
The late-arriving woe,
Thy vengeance falls on every hardened heart,
Nor shall a parent's name prevent the blow.
CHO. May it be mine to shriek with shouts of joy
O'er her and him, when mighty strokes destroy
The lives of both.
Yea, wherefore should I hide
What in my fluttering breast must still abide,
The settled hate, that, like an adverse gale,
Makes rough my spirit's voyage with thoughts of bale?

EL. When shall the arm III 2
Of Zeus, who shields from harm
The saplings round the prostrate oak,
Fall with skull-sundering stroke?
Our rights against the unrighteous we demand.
Hear, buried powers! Be faithful to your land.
CHO. 'Tis ever seen, the homicidal flood,
Poured on earth's breast, provokes new streams of blood.
Destruction calls the Fury from her lair
With woe on woe, despair upon despair,
That breathes from men once slain, to plague the slayer.

OR. Where is your power to save, IV 1
Lords of the grave?
O curse, of endless might,
From lips long lost to light,

We, last of Atreus' race,
Implore thy dreadful grace,
Reft of our halls, and outlawed from our right.
Zeus, whither should we turn?

Cho. Again ye make my changeful heart to yearn
Listening your plaintive cry. One while I feel
My soul with dark misgiving shake and reel,
But by-and-by, the clouds are rolled away,
And courage heightens with new hopes of day.

El. How shall we word it well? IV 2
What horrors tell?
What but the grief and harm
Wrought by our mother's arm?
What magic tongue so smooth
That rancorous wound may soothe?
Ye may fondle the wolf from the fold,
Ere by our mother's voice this rage shall be controlled.

Cho. Like the Persian mourner I V
Added the hand stroke to my cry,
Up and down upon my breast
Clenching fingers without rest,
Scattering bruises round and round,
Till my poor head rang dizzy with the sound!

El. O mother! O enemy! O hard soul!
Like a foe, unhonoured by funeral bowl,
Though a prince, unfollowed by mean or high,
Thou didst bury thy husband without one sigh!

Or. Ah! ah! Every word there hath stung.
But shall she not pay
For each shame she then flung
On my sire?
Heaven and this arm to day
Are mighty with one desire.
Let me sweep them off from the earth,—then I, too,
would pass away!

Cho. Yet more, he was hacked, be th— '——'
And as she had slain
So she buried him there
In his blood,

Minded to store much pain
To o'ertake thy life in a flood.
I tell thee the shames thou dost bear from thy sire. Do
I speak them plain?

El. Thou hear'st our father's death. But I was
driven VI
To grieve apart beneath the dews of heaven;
Chased from the chambers like a thievish hound,
To pour my grief in tears upon the ground.
They came more readily than smiles. We stole
Dark hours for sorrow. Write this in thy soul.
Cho. Let quiet movement of thy thought engrain
These hated truths upon thy heart and brain:
Part thou hast heard: press on, to learn what lies
concealed.
So with unbated force thou shalt assay the field.

Or. Father, assist thy children in their deed!
El. Thy daughter's tears implore thee in deep need!
Cho. And we with both in steadfast harmony
Bid thee come forth to light and hear their cry.
Join this attempt against thine enemy!
Or. The cause is set. The battle doth begin!
El. O Gods, be just; and make the righteous win!
1. Cho. These prayers have thrilled me with their
resolute sound.
Long since the doom lies waiting underground:
Now shall it come, with desolating bound.
2. Cho. Harsh toil imposed by Atè on this race!
Unskilful stroke, vexing a tuneless place!
Intolerable sense of boundless grief!
Groans without end! Sorrows with no relief!
3. Cho. As lint within the sore, so for this wound
The remedies within the house are found.
Not others out of doors,—yourselves must end
The strife, and with the murderous foe contend.
Leader of Cho. So far, our prayer to gods beneath
the ground.
Cho. Oh listen, blessed ones below! Give grace
And glory to these children of your race!

OR. My father, king in all but in thy death,
I pray for power to rule thine ancient hall.
EL. I too, my father, with a daughter's voice,
Pray thee for power to work Aegisthus woe.
OR. So men shall honour thee with sacrifice
And righteous banquets; else the savoury smoke
That steams on earth for souls more fortunate,
Shall leave thee comfortless.
EL. And I will bring
Choice offerings from all my patrimony
In day of marriage, and will honour first
My father's tomb from the paternal hall.
OR. Earth, loose my father to o'erlook the strife!
EL. Crown all, Persephonê, with fair success!
OR. They took thee in the bath, father, forget not!
EL. Think how the net was first arranged for thee.
OR. When thou wast caught in fetters not of brass.
EL. Yea, in a covering shamefully contrived!
OR. Stirs not thy soul at these reproaches, sire?
EL. Doth thy dear head not rise erect in wrath?
OR. Either send Justice fighting on our side,
If thou wouldst gain requital for thy fall,
Or grant us to catch them as they caught thee.
EL. Hear this last cry, my father! Look with pity
On these thy young ones sitting at thy grave,
And feel for both, the maiden and the man.
OR. Wipe not away this seed of Pelops' stock.
While this remains, thou livest, even though dead.
EL. For children save the dead man's name from darkness,
Like corks, that lead along the fishing-net,
Else in the deep the flaxen lines were lost.
OR. *and* EL. *together.* Hear us, this mourning we pour forth for thee.
Respect it, and thou honourest thine own cause.

CHO. Unblamed, however long, has been your strain
Chanted to honour this unwailed for bier.

(*To* Or.) Now, since thy heart is tuned up to the height,
Act, and make trial of your destiny.

Or. Yes. But one question points me to my port.
What made her send those offerings? What late thought
Bade her shed grace o'er wrongs without recall?
Cold honours, yielded to the senseless dead
In wretched guise! I know not by what words
To stamp them, but they cover not her sin!
No draughts, how rich soe'er, can match one drop
Of blood. In vain such labour! All is said.
But if thou know'st the thing I ask, content me.

Cho. I know, dear youth, for we were there. A dream
And terror of the night, that vexed and shook her,
Drove to this rite her sin-perturbèd mind.

Or. Say then, have ye clear knowledge of the vision?

Cho. She said she bare a serpent in her dream.

Or. Did all end so? Or whither turns the tale?

Cho. It woke up like a child in swaddling-bands.

Or. In hunger, the young dragon! for what food?

Cho. She held her breast to appease it in her dream.

Or. How 'scaped her teat the wounding of its tooth?

Cho. Nay, it drew blood thence with the woman's milk.

Or. This vision cannot vanish unfulfilled.

Cho. Startled from sleep, she woke the house with cries.
And many blazing torches, night had quenched,
Renewed last evening's splendours for their queen.
Then sped she forth this funeral drink-offering,
Late hope, to heal a mortifying sore!

Or. Land of my sires, and thou, my father's tomb,
May this fair vision be fulfilled in me!
Surely this reading fits, and shows no flaw?
If, slipt from the same place from whence I sprang,
The serpent, swaddled on my mother's lap,
Showed fight, and gaped upon the teat that fed me,
Curdling the kindly milk with clots of gore,
That she cried out in terror of such pain,

'Tis fated, since she nursed a monstrous thing,
She die a bloody death, and I, grown up
To dragon-hood, must slay her: so this dream
Declares. Be ye the seers to test my judgement.

CHO. So be it! say we. Proceed; we share thy
counsel.

OR. Few words suffice. Electra goes within:
We (*pointing to* PYLADES) follow our intent. And you,
I charge ye,
Do nothing: but preserve in secrecy
These plans, by me so ordered, that by guile,
Even as by guile they slew that princely man,
They may die, tangled in the self same snare.
For so Apollo, to this hour unshamed
By prophecies unverified, prescribed.
I, like a stranger, in well chosen garb,
With Pylades my friend here, will appear
Before the courtyard gate, as a known warrior
Accepted by the house and we will speak
Framing our tongues like Phocian mountaineers.
Well; in a house oppressed with heaven sent sorrow,
None will receive us at the door with smiles.
So we shall stand there, till one pass and say,
With dim conjecture of some accident,
'Why keep ye suppliants tarrying at the gate,
If that Aegisthus, though from home, have heard?'
Then, cross I but the threshold of the court,
Or should he come in afterward and stand
Before my gaze, ere he have asked 'Whence come ye?'
He falls, caught swiftly on my point of steel.
[*A pause, in which he seems to be pondering
something deeply*
Atè, nought scanted of her rights, shall drain
A third deep draught of harshly tempered death!
Thou then, my sister, watch the house with care,
That this emprise may have a flawless issue;
And ye, I pray you, keep a cautious tongue,
That knows the time for speech and prudent silenc
The rest I leave to Hermes, who has brought me
Thus far, and will direct my venturous sword. [*Exeu*

CHORUS. I 1

All-bounteous earth
Rears many a monstrous birth
Too terrible, too sad for human ear,
And 'mid the depths of land-embracing Sea
Lurk myriad forms of hostile fear;
Yea, and 'twixt heaven and earth meteors malign
appear:
And beast and bird, and wind and storm, can wild and
wasteful be. I :

But who may scan
The all-daring spirit of man
And woman, when her heart is petrified?
Who shall express how passion linked to pride
Leads from dark lust to hateful crime,
And from the female's wrongful sway, madly preva
in time
O'er married peace and household joys; and rav
far and wide? I

Be witness else, whoso is not unwise,
What Clotho taught Althaea to devise,
Through fire to slay her son!
She burnt to its last ash the blackened brand,
That tallied with his life, so fate had planned,
From his first cry, long as his days should run.

Hate we next cruel Scylla, that, o'erswayed
By Cretan Minos' gift, her sire betrayed!
She clipt from Nisus' head
The lock of deathless life (since he who broug
That gilded snare, bereft her soul of thought)
Wretch; while he slept!—He joined the shadow
What trooping horrors haunt my thoughtful
Home-troubles by the loveless wife designed
Against her warrior lord!
Ill-seasoned craft of woman-kind,
By loyal hearts abhorred!

Let not woman rule my hearth,
But the man of martial worth,
Awing subjects with his nod,
To his foes—an angry god!
Let not woman's passion rise,
Spreading bale-fire from her eyes!

What strain of grief out-peers the Lemnian tale, III 2
Where pity strives o'er terror to prevail?
Men since in every time
Telling the last assault of bale,
Point to the Lemnian crime.
Story thus on story grows
To the dark and shameful close;
Heaven-condemned, the race of man
Withers 'neath the eternal ban.
Plants whereon a god hath frowned
Live not long to choke the ground.

The sword of Justice held before the breast IV 1
Is ready to strike deep, nor gives she rest
To such as lightly trample o'er their crime
As though its trace must vanish in good time.

They scorn her, but her pillars firmly stand: IV 2
Her blade is forged by Fate's unfading hand.
And the slow Fury, fathomless of heart,
Brings to the house her child to do his part,
Winning late glory with fresh-bleeding brand.

The scene changes to before the palace. Enter ORESTES.

OR. Ho there! Attend this knocking at your gate!
Sirrah! (*knocks*) Again! Who is at home? I say!
Knocks again.) Once more I summon Prince Aegisthus forth,
If these be not inhospitable halls.

PORTER (*within*). I hear! Whence come ye? Tell. What countrymen?

OR. Announce to those who rule this palace-hall,
I bring them news significant and strange.
And be not slow in this, for night's dark wain

Draws near apace, and travellers prepare
To anchor in some hospitable hold.
Let some one with authority come forth.
Woman if need be, though a man were better.
For bashful converse never can be clear.
But man speaks fearlessly to man, and shows
Credentials unmistakable and sure.

Enter CLYTEMNESTRA.

CLY. Sirs, is there aught ye would? Speak then. For we
Lack naught befitting such a house as this,
Warm bath, nor bed for wearied limbs, nor fair
Attendance unobtrusive and discreet.
But if your business be of graver charge,
That is men's duty. They shall hear of it.
OR. I come to Argos from the Phocian land;
Daulis my native city. As I came,
This way directing my self-marshalled route,
Carrying no burden but my clothes, a man,
An utter stranger to me, crossed my path.
When each had told the other of his way
(And in this interchange his name came out,
Strophius of Phocis), he proceeded thus:
'Since Argos is your destination, sir,
Bear this in mind, I pray you, without fail,
To tell his friends, Orestes is no more.
And we would know of them, whether they choose
To fetch him home, or in strange land to leave him,
Forever aliened and disfranchisèd.
Be thou the bearer of their message back.
For as it is, the warrior's calcined bones
Well-mourned, are covered in a brazen urn.'
I give the news I heard (*looking hard at* CLYTEMNESTRA): but I feel doubtful
If I have told them to the proper ear.
The dead man's parents first of all should know.
CLY. Ah me! what ruin clamours in this news!
O ill-averted curse upon this house,
How like a kite thou hast descried our lamb,

How like an archer pierced him from afar,
When seeming laid within a peaceful fold!
Orestes, whom we thought withdrawn from ill,
With free foot rescued from the slippery slime,
Dies, and bereaves me in my wretchedness!
One hope remained, to heal the revel-rout
Of furies in our hall. You bring it home
And, in the act, for ever cancel it.

OR. So kindly welcomed by such wealthy friends
I could have wished to earn my entertainment
By some glad news; for courtesy breeds kindness.
But still my heart declared 'twere impious,
With such affairs in hand, not to complete them
For him who asked and you who entertain me.

CLY. Your worth shall not be poorer in reward
Nor shall you know less friendship in this house.
Some other might have carried the same news.
Come, 'tis the hour when friends who all day lo
Have travelled from afar, should have kind shel
Lead him, and this his fellow-voyager,
To the best-furnished men's apartment there,
And let them have good tendance. Come, disp
Do this, as you shall fear our sharp rebuke!
And we meanwhile shall make this matter kno
Unto our lord, and with good friends to aid u
Will study how to answer this grave need. [

CHO. Handmaids of the royal dwelling,
Is't not time our notes were swelling
For Orestes' princely might
Entering now the dubious fight?
Hear, O Earth! O holy hill!
Where the body lieth still
Of his sire that ruled the fleet,
Hear, and send him helpers meet!
Cunning leads his crafty tread
(This the hour, the moment dread
Darkling Hermes' whispered word
Guards and guides the fateful swo

Draws near apace, and travellers prepare
To anchor in some hospitable hold.
Let some one with authority come forth,
Woman if need be, though a man were better.
For bashful converse never can be clear.
But man speaks fearlessly to man, and shows
Credentials unmistakable and sure.

Enter CLYTEMNESTRA.

CLY. Sirs, is there aught ye would? Speak then.
For we
Lack naught befitting such a house as this,
Warm bath, nor bed for wearied limbs, nor fair
Attendance unobtrusive and discreet.
But if your business be of graver charge,
That is men's duty. They shall hear of it.
OR. I come to Argos from the Phocian land;
Daulis my native city. As I came,
This way directing my self-marshalled route,
Carrying no burden but my clothes, a man,
An utter stranger to me, crossed my path.
When each had told the other of his way
(And in this interchange his name came out,
Strophius of Phocis), he proceeded thus:
'Since Argos is your destination, sir,
Bear this in mind, I pray you, without fail,
To tell his friends, Orestes is no more.
And we would know of them, whether they choose
To fetch him home, or in strange land to leave hi
Forever aliened and disfranchisèd.
Be thou the bearer of their message back.
For as it is, the warrior's calcined bones
Well-mourned, are covered in a brazen urn.'
I give the news I heard (*looking hard at* CLYTEMNES
but I feel doubtful
If I have told them to the proper ear.
The dead man's parents first of all should kno
CLY. Ah me! what ruin clamours in this no
O ill-averted curse upon this house,
How like a kite thou hast descried our lamb,

Enter NURSE.

It seems the stranger's visit makes some sorrow.
For, look, Orestes' nurse comes this way weeping!
Kilissa, what hath drawn thee to the gate
With unfeed mourning thus accompanied?

NURSE. The queen desired me summon to the hall
;gisthus with all speed, to hear the strangers
eak with men's voice their tidings to a man.
nongst us servants she would not let peer
ie gladness that was gathering in her eye,
it gloomed with sullen brow, though well we knew
er triumph at what ruins all the house,
iese news the stranger-men have told too clearly.
r, sure the master's ears will gladden him
; he drinks in this word! O me unhappy!
ow many a sorrow in this house of Atreus,
eaped on old woes, hath racked my breast with sobs!
it never yet felt I a stroke like this.
ie rest I drained, however wofully,
id found the bottom. But, ah me, Orestes,
iat wore my heart out! From the womb I took him,
that great voice that shook me out of bed,
id nursed him on and on. How many a time
ive I had trouble with him, sore, and bootless!
ie unconscious infant, like a tender calf,
ust be looked after, mind you! For it knows not,
hile yet i' the swathing-clouts, to tell its trouble,
hether thirst, or hunger, or more clamant need
ercome it. The young belly keeps not hours!
prophet of all this (sometimes a false one
) mine and swaddling-bands' confusion!) I,
asher and dresser both of babe and babe-clothes,
'as nurse, cook, washerwoman, all in one.
ying these various trades, mistress in all,
reared Orestes by his father's will.
nd now they tell me he is dead! Woe's me!
nd I must go to him who has destroyed
or peace! Ay, gladly will he hear my tale!

CHO. With what attendance doth she bid him come?

(*To the* Household Gods.)
Ye that around the hearth, II
Far from the touch of dearth,
One heart of tranquil mirth,
Gaze from the wall,
May that ill deed of yore
Find his last meed of gore!
Let agèd strife no more
Breed in the hall!
(*To* Apollo.)
And thou whose Pythian haunt
Shines fair and lofty, grant
Our hero's house may rise with freedom bright.
Rend thou the darksome veil
That keeps his glory pale;
Make his dear eyes behold thy glorious light!
(*To* Hermes.)
And let fair Maia's boy,
Helper of all our joy,
Whom secret wiles employ,
Speed this emprise.
Bring what is hid to light,
Hiding his act from sight,
Shrouding by day and night
His wary eyes.

Then we will open to the hearts of all
The riches that return to bless our hall;
Soft breeze, that heralds Spring's glad festival!
The dead we shall lament with shrilling strain,
But that which we lament to me is gain,
And from my friends removes dark hours of bane.
(*To* Orestes *within.*) Thou, when thy time is near,
Shaking thee loose from fear,
Shout o'er the filial deed thy father's name,
Drowning her cries of 'Son'—
Until a deed is done,
Of heartache full, but unalloyed with blame.
Taking the heart of Perseus in thy breast,
For friends on earth, and those beneath at rest,

Work out the indulgence of sad wrath, and win
Thy mournful triumph, harbouring grief within,
But cutting off the murderers for their sin.

Enter Aegisthus.

Aeg. I come, for I was called. Strange news, I hear,
Is brought us by some foreign friends, not such
As one would wish:—Orestes dead! Again,
This house, long gangrened with a rankling wound,
Must be new-burdened with blood-dripping death.
How shall I trace the lines of truth in this?
How know that women's panic have not painted
Some flying figure of a death that vanishes,
Dying in rumour only? Tell me plainly.

Cho. We heard the rumour. But go in and question
Your foreign friends themselves. Report is weak,
Compared with face to face intelligence.

Aeg. I fain would see and ask the man again,
Whether he himself was there, and saw him die,
Or speaks on hearsay from a dim report.
My mind has eyes, and will not soon be hoodwinked.
[*Exit*

Cho. Whence shall I begin the strain?
How, great Zeus, thy favour gain?
How declare my kindly soul
With a voice of due control?
Now the blade distained before
With our murdered chieftain's gore,
Brought to trial, shall reveal
Whether fate the doom would seal
Of this house for evermore,
Or the torch in freedom's name
For these children shall proclaim
Proud return to lordly power,
To their rich paternal dower.

Orestes in the deadly close,
Grapples alone with both his foes:
Relying on his single might.
May victory lead him to his right!

AEG. (*within*). Oh, oh! I am slain!
CHO. Ha! Which way goes the battle? (*Another cry.*) Ha! Again?
Withdraw we till the deed is perfected,
And let us seem unwitting of this blow.—

Enter ATTENDANT.

The strife is now determined. Who comes here?
ATTENDANT. Woe, for our master! All is ove[r]
Woe! Aegisthus is no more.
Woe, yet again! [...] the women's gate with speed!
[...]bar, unbar the women's gate [...] will not serve
[...] young men do it! Weaklings will not serve
[...] late for succour any way. He is slain.
[...]t do it! ho! I say! Bestir, bestir!
[...]hat? Is the house asleep? Dumb walls rece[...]
[...] bootless cry! Where's Clytemnestra? Wh[...]
[...]hat doth she, when the edge of righteous do[...]
[...]overs at hand to crash upon her neck?

Enter CLYTEMNESTRA.

CLY. What cry is here? What dost thou [...] gate?
ATT. I say, the dead have slain the living [...]
CLY. Ay me! I read thy riddle! Oh, un[...]
By guile, even as we slew! Give me an axe[...]
A strong one; quickly too! I'll dare the iss[ue]
Be it for me or against me. I am come
To the utterance in this fight with Fate an[d ...]
[*The dead body of* AEGISTHUS *is disclosed,* [...] *standing by*
OR. Thee now I seek. Aegisthus hath e[...]
CLY. Oh, thou art dead! Thy dear, gr[...] flown!
OR. Was he so dear to thee? Then tho[u ...]
In the same grave with blameless constan[cy ...]
CLY. O son, forbear! O child, respect [...]
This breast, whereat thou often, soothed [...]
[...] with baby mouth the bounteo[us ...]

OR. Counsel me, Pylades! Shall mercy blunt
My sword against my mother?

PYL. Where are then
Apollo's prophecies of what should be,
His conjuration and clear oracle?
Hate all the world, but be the friend of Heaven.

OR. Thou hast prevailed. Thy wisdom guides me well.
Here! I will slay thee by the man thou lovest!
Thou didst account him better than my sire
In life: then in his death thou shalt lie with him,
Since here thou hast loved, hating where love was due.

CLY. I nursed thee: be my comforter in age!

OR. How should I live with her who killed my sire?

CLY. The Destinies wrought there. My son, my son!

OR. Destiny works a different doom to-day.

CLY. Thy mother's curse! Doth that not awe thee, boy?

OR. My mother flung me forth a prey to fortune.

CLY. I flung thee forth? To a friend's hearth I sent thee.

OR. You made base barter of my freeborn head.

CLY. Where are the gifts they gave me for you, say?

OR. *Where* is the gift? 'Twere shame to speak this plainly.

CLY. You say not how your father stept aside.

OR. Chide not the labourer, while you're housed at home.

CLY. Know'st thou the pain of a lorn woman, child?

OR. I know she thrives by him who toils abroad.

CLY. Oh! Wilt thou kill thy mother? O my son

OR. I kill thee not. Thy sin destroyeth thee.

CLY. Ha! 'Ware thy mother's furies. Guard thee well!

OR. How 'scape I my *sire's furies*, if I spare thee

CLY. Like dirges at a grave, my voice is vain.

OR. Yea, from his grave my father breathes thy doom

CLY. Ah!
I have borne and reared a serpent for my son.

OR. Then is fulfilled the terror of thy dream!
[CLYTEMNESTRA *appears to swoon; then rouses herself and looks defiance at* ORESTES
OR. Thy deed was wrongful, so shall be thy death.
[*They are withdrawn into the palace*
CHO. Of this pair also must I mourn the fall.
But since the crested wave of boundless blood
Buoys up Orestes on its crown, though sadly,
I pray this eye o' the house be ne'er put out.

Even Priam's sons thou didst o'ertake at length, I 1
O Nemesis! thou broughtest down their strength.
Now Agamemnon's house hath felt the hand
Of one with lion heart and warlike brand,
An unrelenting Ares, Heaven hath sent
Through Phoebus' oracle with fierce intent.

Shout! for our master's house escapeth free I 2
From heartless vice and wasting luxury,
Wild courses of that fell usurping pair.
One came to avenge: dark craft he made his care,
But in the battle she herself took part,
Zeus' daughter, seated in the avenger's heart,

She guided his right arm aright: her name II 1
We mortals have called Justice. Who shall blame?
She breathes upon her foes destroying wrath.
Such issue the Parnassian Lord, that hath
His caverned shrine upon the Pythian height,
To banish guile brings guilefully to light.

Long the house hath been oppressed.
Now he giveth longed-for rest.
Even Almighty power and will
Cannot minister to ill.
Now to Heaven is worship due
Since light came and darkness flew.

Arise, ye domes! The cruel yoke is past. II 2
Long have ye grovelled. Be yourselves at last.
No more a slave of servants shall I groan,
No more these walls shall seem vile heaps of stone;

Put on thy glory, mansion! since the power
Of Purity shall cleanse thee from this hour.

> Now whate'er of pain or sorrow
> Waited for a far to-morrow,
> Flies on leaden wings away.
> Night is past. Behold, the day!

ORESTES *is discovered, with the dead bodies of* AEG. *and* CLY.

OR. Behold ye these usurpers of the land!
This pair that slew my sire and spoiled my home!
Then loftily they sate enthroned, and now
They still are friends, if one may judge of them
By what appears. They have kept their oath and pledge.
Were they not sworn to slay my sire, and die
Together? See how well they keep their word!
See also, ye whose ears attest this act,
This fell contrivance for my sire's defeat,
How hands and heels were fettered and conjoined!
Ho! stretch it forth: unfold it and display
This man-inveigler, that the Sire may see;
I mean not mine, but yonder Sun, whose eye
Surveys the world;—show him my mother's crime!
That some day he may witness in my cause,
And prove my right thus to have slain my mother.
Aegisthus counts for nothing. He but pays
The adulterer's forfeit, as the custom holds.
But she, that could contrive this horrid end
For him whose seed she had borne beneath her zone,
Burden once dear, though hostile now 'tis proved
And bitter,—how appears she to your thoughts?
Deem ye the touch of asp or basilisk
More certain to destroy and putrify,
Yea though she bit not, than her venomous will?—
How shall I name this with a blameless tongue?
Beast's pitfall? or the footcloth for a corpse?
Or bather's awning? Nay, a hunting net,
No garment, but the limbs' entanglement.

A thief might throw such vesture o'er his prey,
To rob beguilèd travellers on their way:
With this, much gold by murder might he win,
Heating his heart with perilous fires of sin.
Ere such a consort harbour in my hall,
Heaven-blighted, lorn of issue, let me fall!

CHO. Out, alas, dark deed of crime!
Foul and hideous was thy death.
Woe for all the wrongs of Time!
Sorrow is theirs, who still have breath.

OR. Say, guilty or not guilty? Here, behold!
This cloth bears witness how Aegisthus' sword
Plunged deep! The stains, agreeing with the yea
Mar all the pattern with their pallid hue.
Gazing on this, I feel my father's worth,
I wail his death, as I were there to see.
And this vile web awakes my heart to mourn
For all things done and suffered by our race
From its first hour to this dire victory.

CHO. None that dwelleth upon earth
Standeth free from grief and fear.
Woe hath been and woe hath birth,
One is now and one is near.

OR. Hear me declare:—How this will end I
not.
I feel the chariot of my spirit borne
Far wide. My soul, like an ill-managed cours
Is carrying me away, while my poor heart
To her own music dances in wild fear.
Then, while I am still myself, hear me decla
Friends, it was right my mother should be s
Else had my father's death defiled your lan
Her life was an offence to heaven! And I
Was drawn to do it by one power alone,
—That I proclaim,—Phoebus, the Pythian
Saying, if I did it I should bear no blame,
But if I did it not, the punishment
Were more than I can speak of,—far beyo
A human archer's flight to o'ertake that v
And now, behold, I go to find his seat,

Armed with this olive-branch and tuft of wool,
To earth's mid-navel, Phoebus' dwelling-place,
And the bright flame, pronounced imperishable,
For refuge from this heart-offending blood.
He charged me not to seek another shrine.
The hour will come when all this Argive folk
Will be my witness—Menelaus too,—
This evil was predestined and unblamed.
I wander forth again an outlawed exile:
But this my declaration will remain
To clear Orestes, whether he live or die.
CHO. Nay, nay, thy deed was good: yoke not thy tongue
To evil auspice and foreboding drear.
All Argos' people hold their liberties
Of thee, who hast cloven the twofold dragon's neck.
OR. Ah! ah!
What grisly troop come yonder in grey robes,
With Gorgon-faces and thick serpent hair
Twisted in writhing coils? I must be gone.
CHO. Best of all sons unto thy sire, what fancies
Dizzy thy brain? Be constant. Calm thy fear.
OR. This is no fancy, but a present woe.
I see my mother's Furies clearly there!
CHO. The blood is yet but recent on thy hand,
Hence this confusion of thy heart and brain.
OR. O Lord Apollo! There! What multitudes!
Their eyes drop down with hate and loveless blood.
CHO. Yet there is peace for thee. Apollo's hand
Shall free thy life from this assault of woe.
OR. Ye do not see them; but I see them well.
They are on me! They pursue me forth. I go. [*Exit.*
CHO. May peace attend thy path, and some kind power
O'erlook and guard thee in a prosperous way!

Three storms have spent their strength against these walls.
The third is over. First in yonder halls
Came death of children and a feast abhorred,

Then that foul murder of our kingly lord.
—The leader of the Achaean host was held
Within the bath: there, without mercy, felled.—
Now thirdly comes, a saviour, shall I say,
Or crowning sorrow? Whither will the sway
Of fate lead forth the issue? Where shall cease
Dread Atè's fury? When be lulled to peace?

THE EUMENIDES

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA

The Pythoness.
CHORUS *of Erinyes, or Furies.*
ATHENA.
Ghost of CLYTEMNESTRA.
APOLLO.
ORESTES.
Council of the Areopagus.
Attendant Maidens.

The SCENE is laid, at first, before the adytum Inmost shrine) of Apollo at Delphi; afterwards on hill of the Acropolis at Athens.

The TIME of the opening Scene is shortly after death of Clytemnestra. Then an interval of month years is supposed to elapse.

Orestes has arrived at his destination, the temple of Apollo at Delphi (Choeph. 1034 ff.), pursued by the Erinyes. He is clinging to the omphalos, and they have fallen asleep. This scene is disclosed after the prologue, in which the Pythian priestess describes the unexpected sight, and her terror on beholding it.

Apollo himself then appears, and assures Orestes of his protection, but bids him proceed to Athens for Athena's judgment. He departs and the Erinyes remain. But Clytemnestra's ghost arrives and rouses them. They sing their wild prelude, after which they are driven forth by Apollo.

The scene is changed to Athens, where Orestes makes his supplication to Athena. The Erinyes enter, and, after a brief altercation, sing over him their 'binding hymn.'

Athena now comes in person and finds Orestes clinging
her image, with the Erinyes round him. She challenge
iese strange intruders; they declare their office, and th
oddess obtains from Orestes an account of himsel
Veighing the gravity of the cause, Athena makes know
ier purpose of instituting her Council of the Areopagu
While the Elders are assembling, the Erinyes make know
their mission to mankind.

Silence is proclaimed by order of Athena; and, as t
first witness, Apollo comes in. He not only gives eviden
but pleads in favour of Orestes that the son is bound to
father but not to his mother.

Both sides having been heard, the Elders cast their v
into the two urns. Athena gives her vote openly,
claring that should the Court be equally divided, her v
will determine the case for acquittal. She has no mo
and her sympathies are on the father's side. A mome
suspense follows, while the votes are counted. They
to be equal on both sides, and Orestes is accord
acquitted. He proclaims an indefeasible alliance be
Argos and Athens. The Erinyes give vent to their in
tion at being overborne by 'younger gods.' But
chagrin is at last softened by the promises and th
suasive eloquence of Athena. They consent to rem
Athens, not to curse but to bless the people, so long as
hold purity and equitable dealings are duly observ
dwelling is appointed for them in a cave beneath th
Ares, and to this they are conducted by their ap
female guides in a solemn procession, with which
(and the whole trilogy) concludes.

THE EUMENIDES

The Pythoness is discovered.

Pyth. First in my prayer I sanctify the power
Of Earth, first prophetess; and then of her,
Themis, who next upon her mother's throne
Of divination sate, as legends tell.
Third came and by consent was stablished here
Another Titan daughter of the ground,
Phoebê, who gave, in honour of his birth,
This place to Phoebus, near to her in name.
He left the Delian reef and the broad sea,
Landed on Pallas' ship receiving shore,
And sought these pastures, neath Parnassus' height,
Led by Hephaestus' sons, his worshippers,
Good pioneers who make rough countries smooth.
This people, at his coming, and their king,
Delphos, sage pilot of the land, enriched him
With reverent offerings, while Zeus inspired
His heart with wisdom, and established him
Fourth holder of this high prophetic seat.
Here Phoebus dwells, his Sire's interpreter.
These names I make the prelude of my prayer.
Then, praising Pallas of the vestibule,
And the fair nymphs, where the Corycian cave,
Beloved of birds, owns presence more divine,
Nor yet forgetting him, who haunts this land
Since, leading forth his Bacchanals to war,
He hunted Pentheus like a hare,—once more,
Naming the springs of Pleistos and the strong
Poseidon, and the absolute perfectness
Of Zeus, I mount to my prophetic throne.
May all these powers now crown mine entrance here
With best acceptance! If the worshippers

Be Greeks, let them cast lots, and so come in,
Keeping the ordinance. For I give forth
My oracles, even as the god shall lead.

[*She enters the 'adytum'; and presently comes forth again.*

Dreadful to tell of, dreadful to behold,
Is that which drives me back from Phoebus' shrine.
It saps my vigour, and unnerves my knees,
That hands for feet must prop my tottering gait.
A frightened crone is nothing, a mere babe.
I came within the laurel-mantled cell:
Where kneeling at Earth's navel I behold
A man red-handed, with blood-dabbled blade,
And branch of olive from the topmost bough,
Wound modestly in suppliant-wise with wool
(To tell it plainly) copious, white and pure.
But seated there before him were a troop
Of women, shall I say? A wondrous band,
Not women, nay but Gorgons. No, the type
Is different. I beheld the Gorgons once
Painted as robbing Phineus of his food.
These have no wings, and they are dark of hue
And altogether hideous, breathing out
Their snorting breath in gusts not to be borne,
Distilling from their eyelids drops of hate.
Nor is their garb befitting to come near
Man's dwelling, much less heavenly tabernacles.
I have seen no race that harbours such a breed,
Nor know I what strange land that gendered them
Vaunts to have reared them without after-woe.
Let mighty Phoebus for his own behoof
Look to what follows. He is master here,
Who with high vision and all-potent charms
Purges all mansions. Let him purge his own.

The adytum is opened. ORESTES *and the* FURIES *are discovered.* APOLLO *appears.*

APOLLO (*to* OR.). I will ne'er forsake thee. I, thy constant guard,
Near thee or far, seen or invisible,

See it with thy spirit; for the soul in slumber
Hath ofttimes clearer vision. By daylight
Our best foreseeings are but narrow and dim.
Much wealth of mine ye have glutted, drink-offerings,
Unmixed with wine, tempered to soothe your heart,
And rich burnt offerings at dead of night,
That hour of dread, avoided by all gods.
Now those my gifts are trampled under foot,
And he is gone, escaping like a fawn,
Springing with ease out of your midmost net,
With eyes of triumph o'er your impotence.
Hear this appeal: consider, O ye powers
Of nether gloom! Touching my soul I speak,
I, Clytemnestra, now a shadowy dream.

CHO. Ngrr!

CLY. Snore ye? But he is gone, fled forward far.
My son hath his abettors—I have none.

CHO. Ngrr!

CLY. Too deep thy slumber. Where is thy compassion?
His mother's murderer, Orestes, flies.

CHO. Oh!

CLY. 'Oh!' say'st thou? Still asleep! Arise wi[th] speed.
When hast thou managed aught save plots of ba[ne]

CHO. Oh!

CLY. Sleep and fatigue, confirmed conspirators,
Have undermined the dreaded monster's might.

CHO. Ngrgr! (*waking*).
Take hold! take hold! take hold! take hold. [Be]ware!

CLY. In dreams you hunt your prey, and l[ike a] hound
That broods upon the chase unceasingly,
Whimper. For shame! Rise, yield not to fat[igue],
Nor let soft slumber dull the sense of wrong.
Smart inwardly beneath my just rebuke.
Reproof to honest hearts is like a goad.
Follow him forth, renewing your pursuit,
[With] the fell wind of your gory breath.

Hot vapour from the furnace of your hate,
Strike full upon his wildly drifting bark,
To shrivel, blast, consume and wither him.
[*Ghost vanishes.*

CHORUS.

Awake! Waken thou her, as I wake thee!
Wilt thou yet sleep? Arise, and, spurning slumber,
Prove we our prelude, whether it be of power.

Ugh! They have done us wrong. Friends, o'er and
o'er I 1
We are wronged without redress Most grievous woe,
Ugh! is our lot, an ill not to be borne.
The net is void, the quarry vanished forth!
Vanquished by slumber I have lost my prey

Robber of rights art thou, *son of the highest*! I 2
Thy youth has trampled down our ancient power,
All for thy suppliant's cause, a man forbid,
Godless, abhorred, the ruthless matricide.
A god, thou hast stolen away the abominable,
The blood-accursed. Shalt thou be cleared for this?

What dreams were mine! Reproach, a charioteer, II 1
With piercing goad held javelin wise, hath smitten
Beneath my heart upon a vital spot
Like *the executioner's hated scourge it stings*
With deep-inflicted inly shuddering wound.

Such deeds this younger brood of gods will do. II 2
Swaying all things by *main force beyond* the right.
One sheet of gore, mantled from base to cope,
Earth's midmost shrine is visibly beheld
Self-cloked with horror breathing guilt of blood.

O prophet-god, thou hast stained thine own hearth-
stone, III 1
From thine *own* mind, moved by no just a
Breaking the law of gods to honour man,
Threatening to quell Fate's *everlasting* reign

My heart thou hast vexed and shalt not free his soul;
Yea, though he lurk in hell, he is forfeit still.
refuge but redoubles the offence
dogs him to dire ruin unredeemed.

. (*re-appearing*). Begone, I bid you, forth of mine abode!
l your departure from my mystic cell;
overta'en by the wing'd glistering snake,
-fanged, that darts from this all-golden bow,
mit dark flesh-froth in your agony,
t of heart's blood ye have drained from men.
ne not with your presence this fair shrine;
go where headsmen execute the doom,
e eyes are gouged, throats gashed, where robbed of prime
lose all hope of offspring, tender limbs
hacked or stoned; where men, impaled alive,
long and bitterly. Hear ye what feast
charms for you, ye god-abominate?
every lineament declares it. Go,
bit, as beseems such forms, the den
ome blood-lapping lion, nor infect
touch accursèd my oracular seat.
herded by no goat-herd, ye fell flock.
d of all in Heaven. Away, depart!
o. Sovereign Apollo, hear but our reply:
of this outrage not the accomplice art,
author and sole agent, guilty of all.
. How is that certified? Speak so far forth.
o. Your oracle prevailed with this your guest,
he should kill his mother.
. I declared
should I not?) that he should right his sire.
o. Thou didst receive him ere the blood was dry.
. I bade him crave atonement at this shrine.
o. And now he comes, blame you his escort here?
. *As unbefitting to approach my doors.*
o. 'Tis our appointed office.

How? Make known
Ap.
Your glorious privilege.
Cho. To dog the steps
Of matricides and drive them far from home.
Ap. And what of husband-slaying wives?
Cho. That blood
Bears not the blame of kindred violence.
Ap. Far then from honour and of small account
Ye rate the pledge great Hera gave to Zeus,
And rob of all regard the Queen of Love
From whom fresh springs of sweetest concord flow.
Since fate-appointed wedlock well observed
'Twixt man and wife is mightier than an oath.
Now, if one slay the other and no wrath
From thee arise, no watchful recompense,
Unfairly dost thou chase Orestes forth.
One crime thou weighest full heavily, and one
The world may see thee taking quietly.
Howbeit, this cause Athena shall review.
Cho. I'll ne'er relinquish him; believe it not.
Ap. Pursue him then, and make thy labour more.
Cho. Disparage not my rights in thy discourses.
Ap. I care not for thy rights.
Cho. Thou hast thine own,
Nearest the throne supreme, so rumour saith.
Meanwhile, drawn by the scent of mother's blood,
I'll prosecute this quarry and hunt him down.
Ap. And I'll protect my suppliant with my power.
For should I willingly forsake his cause,
His wrath in Heaven and earth were full of dread.
[*Exeunt.*

The scene is changed to the Athenian Acropolis. A long time is supposed to have intervened.

ORESTES.

Sovereign Athena sped by Phoebus' word
I am come. Do thou with clemency receive
The outcast,—not red handed, nor unpurged,
But mellowed by long time, and travel-worn

Among new households, alien ways, o'er land
And beyond sea, keeping the oracular charge
Of Phoebus, in obedience to whose will
me, dread goddess, to thy sanctuary;
r, clinging to thy holy image here,
ide the issue of the arbitrament.

CHORUS (*entering*).

! 'Tis his trail beyond a doubt. Pursue
ne voiceless guide's direction. Like a hound
racking the blood-marks of a wounded fawn,
quest and follow where the gore-drops lie.

My breast heaves inwardly and pants with toil
Of mankind-quelling travail. The whole earth
I have ranged in shepherding my quarry, and flo
Wingless over the deep pursuing him,
No ship more swiftly. Now he is hereabout,
Not far, close-crouched, as on her form the hare.

My spirit smiles: blood smell I, human blood.
Spy all around again, lest he be gone,
Lest he be flown unwares, scathless of us,
Stained with a mother's death, stolen from our

Nay, but again he hath found protection here:
Hugging the image of the undying maid,
He sues her arbitration for his crime.

Avails him nought; the mother's blood, ah woe
Once poured upon the ground, is past recall.

Thou from thy living limbs shalt yield in turn
Red pulp of thy fair flesh to be devoured
By me. I will nourish me with the strange d
Pressed from the vintage of thy youth. I wi
And drag thee down where thou shalt pa
pangs
Thy mother's death-throes. There shalt thou
Whoever else hath sinned of mortal men,
And dealt unrighteously with impious heart
Toward god or stranger or dear mother or

Each overwhelmed with his due meed of doom.
For Hades holds his audit there beneath,
And leaves nought blank in that dire register.
  Or. Taught wisdom in the school of misery
I am *learned in all atonement*, and have skill
To hold my peace or speak in season due.
But in this day's affair I am authorized
Under high bidding to speak forth. The stains
Of slaughter on my hands are dulled and pale.
The guilt of matricide is washed away.
For, while yet recent, at Apollo's hearth
'Twas driven out and purged with death of swine.
And tedious were the number to tell o'er
Of men I have communed with and brought no harm:
All-mellowing Time makes old defilement pure.
Now with clean lips void of offence I call
Athena, sovereign of this land, to come
And be mine aid: in recompense whereof
Myself, my country, and our Argive men
Shall, without conquest, be for evermore
Her faithful firm allies. Whether she move
Within the region of the Libyan land
By the Tritonian waters of her birth,
Or sit enthroned there, aiding whom she loves,
Or whether, a bold manlike marshaller,
She sway the armies of Phlegraean fields,
May she come hither—for a god can hear
Though far away—and loose me from my load.
  Cho. Think not Apollo nor Athena's might
Shall rescue thee from wandering all forlorn
On paths of ruin, never tasting joy,
Sapless, the dwindling food of wrathful powers.
Answerest thou not, but scornest all I speak,
Thou, stalled and consecrate for my behoof?
I'll eat thee alive ere thou be sacrificed.
Hark to the song that shall enthrall thy soul!
  [*The* Chorus *range themselves in the Orchestra.*

Come knit we our ranks in the dance, for my heart now
  is bent to declare

he spirit of horror that moves us, the rights over men and the care
hat our company wieldeth. Our judgement we evermore hold to be just.
o wrath from us creeps toward the wight who shows hands free from murder and lust;
Ie shall live all his days far from evil. No harm shall the righteous betide.
But when one hath sinned like this man, and his gory transgression would hide,
We appear for the dead, and our witness, that swerves not in aught from the truth,
O'ertakes the blood-guilty with ruin, and shatters his life without ruth.

Mother, who gave me birth,—O mother Night!— I 1
For chastisement of souls that dwell in light
And darkness, hear my grief! Latona's child
Robs me of honour,—he would wrest away
This cowering prey,
My victim, with a mother's death defiled;
To plague whose head
Discomforted,
We sing this strain,
The spirit's chain,
Dazing all reason dim,
The Furies' binding hymn,
Enlivened with no lyre,
Setting the heart on fire,
To mortal men a bane,
Ranking them with the dead.

Eternal Fate decreed for me this lot I 2
Unchangeably, deep in my life inwrought,
To follow close on him of mortal mould
Who hath slain his kin. I track him to his doom
Beyond the tomb,
Nor is he free from guilt though dead and cold:
To plague whose head
Discomforted,

We sing this strain,
The spirit's chain,
Dazing all reason dim,
The Furies' binding hymn,
Enlivened with no lyre,
Setting the heart on fire,
To mortal men a bane,
Ranking them with the dead.

This destined power attends me from my birth II 1
O'er habitants of Earth,
But no immortal answereth at my call,
Nor shares my festival:
Their milk-white garb to wear
I neither hope nor care.
But when domestic strife
Hath ta'en a kindred life,
To plague that head
Discomforted,
We keenly race,
In eager chase:
And, mighty though he be,
We make him pine and dree
Blood strangely shed.

But from all else we would forfend this care, II 2
Nor let immortals share
The burden of dread rites assigned to me.
Beyond appeal are we.
Since from his council-board
Zeus bans this brood abhorred,
And hates us, dripping o'er
With recompensing gore—
When on the head
Discomforted
We bring with might
And wild affright
Our bounding tread,
With tireless feet
Quelling the fleet,—

Whom none shall save;
Daunting the brave
With careless dread. III 1

Imaginations high
And flaunting to the sky,
Diminished, fade and shrink,
And down to darkness sink
At our soul-withering glance
And our dark-vestured dance. III 2

His mind with madness fraught
He falls, but knoweth it not
Such overshadowing ban
Hovers to blind the man,
While rumour all around
Of darkness doth resound.

ment it how ye may, the darkness broods IV
nd lingers. Not for us are changeful moods
r futile purposes. Our thoughts endure.
nexorable are we, severe and sure.
)read, though dishonoured and cut off from Day
Aloof from all the gods we hold our way
On paths of horror, rough with fell Despair;
Men seeing and blind alike shall stumble there. I

Who then can listen without trembling awe
When we proclaim our fate-entrusted law,
Which Gods allow and ratify? My power,
Mine from of old, is mine unto this hour:
In primal darkness once for all 'twas given,
Before the natal hour of Earth and Heaven.
Though under-ground be mine appointed home,
Where Helios' genial rays may never come.

ATHENA *appears.*

ATHENA. I heard your shout of summons fro
Where by Scamander I was purposing
To take possession of the soil which erst
The Achaean leaders, foremost of their race,
Gave as my portion of the spoils of war.

In freehold indefeasible and sure,
A glorious meed for Theseus' progeny.
Thence I have travelled without weariness
Yoking to this my car the all-perfect steeds,
Wingless, with aegis flapping on the wind.
Your presence, unfamiliar to my land,
Daunts me no whit, yet with strange looks I gre
you.
Who and what are ye? To all here I speak,
Both to this stranger kneeling by my shrine,
And you, like unto none begotten or born,
Seen not of gods amongst the goddesses,
Nor comparable to mortal semblances.
More say I not. 'Twere far from equity
To speak harsh judgements without matter of blan

Cho. Daughter of Zeus, thou shalt hear all in bri
We are gloom-diffusing children of dark night;
Called 'Weird ones' in our home beneath the ground.

Ath. That name and parentage I know full well.

Cho. My rights and attributes thou art now to learn.

Ath. I shall not fail, so they be clearly told.

Cho. I hunt the homicide from home.

Ath. And where
Ends for the man-slayer his flight?

Cho. Where joy
Hath no abiding-place.

Ath. 'Gainst him now here
Doth thy harsh voice proclaim such banishment?

Cho. Since he hath chosen to be his mother's slayer.

Ath. And was that choice without compulsive dread?

Cho. Whose wrath so terrible that could enforce
A parent's slaughter?

Ath. I have heard one side,
Two being in presence.

Cho. But the accused is one
Incompetent to swear, a perjured soul.

Ath. Ye love the name of righteous, I perceive,
More than true righteousness.

Cho. How? Let me hear.
Thou art opulent in wisdom.

ATH. Care not thou
For wrongful victory won through an oath.
CHO. Question him, then, and judge the cause aright.
ATH. Consent ye my decision shall be law?
CHO. Yea, bending to thy worth and parentage.
ATH. Stranger, make answer in thy turn. Declare,
First, thy descent, thy country, thy distress,
Then thy defence against the charge preferred;
If in reliance on just right thou art here
Grasping mine image, watching by my shrine,
Ixion-like, in formal suppliant guise.
To these demands speak plainly thy reply.
OR. Sovereign Athena, let me first remove
From thy last words a weight of anxious care.
Suppliant, but not red-handed, I kneel here
Beside thine image, staining not thy shrine.
Hereof I bring assurance unreproved.
No shedder of blood may ope his lips, till one
Endued with power to cleanse hath sprinkled him
With sacrifice of sucklings. Long ago
In other fanes that rite hath passed on me,
And streams of living water furthermore.
My cause being cleared from that presumptive blot,
I'll tell thee my descent. An Argive I,
Whose father well thou knowest, lord of the fleet,
With whose firm aid thou madest Ilion,
The city of Troy, no city. He is dead,
Foiled in his home-return, cruelly slain
By my black-hearted mother, whose deep guile
Encased his body with a cunning snare
That from the bath gave witness of his blood.
I, being an exile in my youth, came home
And slew my mother, I avouch it here,
Wreaking on her my dearest father's death.
Which guilt, if guilt there be, is amply shared
By Phoebus, who denounced upon my life
Heart-piercing agonies in recompense,
Should I not thus requite the wrong-doers.
Howbeit, the judgement rests with thee alone.
Howe'er it fall, I will accept thy doom.

ATH. Too hard for human judgement [illegible]
Should mortal undertake it. Yea for me
To give decision in a wrathful suit
For homicide, were to exceed my right.
Moreover,—thou art come unto my town
Not unaneled,—a harmless suppliant,
And cleansed;—yet, ere thou art called my citizen,
I would have thee clear from every shadow of blame.
Now these, where they have power, not easily
May be dismissed, but if they compass not
The victory they crave, their venomed will
Falls on the land for evil in time to come.
So stands the business, troublous every way;
Alike disastrous and impossible
For me, to let them bide, to ban them forth.
Howbeit, since the affair hath lighted here,
The court I now appoint for trial of blood,
The court I now [illegible] of their oath,—
—Men reverencing [illegible]
Shall live in ordinance [illegible] let your proofs be called
Produce your witness [illegible] right
In oath-bound aid to fortify [illegible] here
While I cull forth from [illegible] to give
My citizens of noblest [illegible]
On this great plea their true arbitrament
With righteous thoughts, [illegible] from their oath.
[*Exit* ATHENA

CHORUS. I 1

Now the rash [illegible] of change
Stirs confusion [illegible]
If our suit to-day must fail
And the [illegible] and the [illegible]
Of this breaker of [illegible] laws
Shall be suffered [illegible] to prevail
Rendered reckless [illegible] deed,
In transgression [illegible]
Mortals shall unite [illegible]
And the [illegible]
From a child, [illegible]
Shall abound in the oncoming [illegible]

I 2

For the mother or the sire
Shall in agonies expire,
While our wrath doth silent lie.
Our watchings are o'er,
And our madness shall vex them no more.
Let them die one and all, let them die!
From his fellow each shall hear,
Telling of a neighbour's bier,
'Pangs of conscience now have end;'
The poor wight in despair
Cries for help to the wandering air.
Not a soul shall reply, none attend.

II 1

Let not stricken men make moan
To Justice or the Furies' throne!
That appeal may often rise
From some poor father as he dies
Or the mother ere she 's slain;
But they utter it in vain.
None shall heed the voice that calls,
For the tower of Justice falls.

II 2

Somewhere, Awe must have his seat
And Wisdom find secure retreat.
Since 'tis good beneath the stress
Of terror to learn humbleness.
Who that in his inmost thought
Of heart-trembling harbours nought—
Man or state—shall give to light
Equal reverence for the right?

II

Approve not thou the lawless life
Nor that which tyrants hold in fee,
The mean in everything with strength is rife
By Heaven's supreme decree.
Much else is diverse in His government:
This stands harmonious still and strong;
Rebellious, impious hardiment,
Gives ever birth to wrong.
But from the healthful modest heart
... of crime hath part

Springs that men pray for earnestly,
Ever-beloved Prosperity.

III 2

Take this monition once for all:
Regard with steadfast reverence
The firmly-based, high-towering pedestal
Where Right hath residence;
Nor spurn it godlessly, beholding gain;
Since punishment is hard at hand,
And final vengeance shall remain
With ever during brand.
Then honour parents as ye ought
With helpful deeds and reverent thought,
And to the stranger duly pay
Kind tribute on his devious way.

IV

The man that willingly without constraint
Keeps righteousness, shall not be all unblest,
Nor come to final ruin though he faint.
But he that hath with froward heart transgresse
Confounding righteousness in wild unrest,
Against his will shall one day shorten sail
With stress of tempest suddenly oppressed,
When yards are splintering as high winds prevail.

I

Then, whelmed and wrestling with the whirl
tide.
He clamours forth the appeal that none shall h
While Heavenly powers laugh at his humbled pr
His wild dejection, and his frenzied fear:
Since one who never dreamed such grief were
Embayed 'mongst miseries beyond recall,
Wrecks all his life held heretofore most dear
'Gainst rocks of right, where none laments his

ATHENA *returns*

ATH. Herald, proclaim strict silence throug
host;
Or let the Tuscan trump, piercing the sky,
Sound forth amain, surcharged with breath of
Such hest to all my people. For to day,

While this high council are assembling here,
Behoves mute audience, till my law be heard
And fixed in everlasting memory
By all this city and the councillors here,
That this great plea may be determined well.

APOLLO *appears.*

CHO. Sovereign Apollo, rule within thy right.
What claim hast thou upon this cause? Declare.
AP. I am here in evidence, to prove this man
A lawful suppliant who approached my shrine
And there by me was purged from guilt of blood:
Also to plead, myself, in part; for I
Am charged with Clytemnestra's death.—Athena,
Open the cause, in due form, thine own way.
ATH. Herewith I open it. The way is plain.
We hear the accuser first, whose careful plea
Instructs us in the groundwork of the case.
CHO. We are many, but our words are brief and few
Let thine be short and simple in reply.
Answer this first. Thy mother didst thou slay?
OR. I slew her. That is not to be denied.
CHO. So. One of the three wrestling-bouts is o'
OR. Boast if ye will. Ye have not thrown me y
CHO. Still thou art bound to tell us how 'twas do
OR. With sword-edge pressed against her thro
'Tis said.
CHO Whose will and counsel moved thee to
deed?
OR. Apollo's mandate, as he witnesseth.
CHO. The prophet bade thee be a matricide?
OR. And to this hour I am well content witha
CHO. Thou'lt change that tune, when judgem
seizeth thee.
OR. My father from his tomb will take my p
I fear not.
CHO. Ay, rely on dead men's aid,
When guilty of matricide!
OR. She that is slain
Was doubly tainted.

CHO. How? Inform the Cor
OR. She slew her wedded lord, and slew
CHO. Death gave her quittance, then. But
livest.
OR. And while she lived, why didst thou n
her?
CHO. No tie of blood bound her to whom
OR. But I was tied by blood-affinity
To her who bare me?
CHO. Else, thou accursèd c
How nourished she thy life within her wom
Wouldst thou renounce the holiest bond of
OR. Now give thy witness and expound t
Apollo; was I just in slaying her?
To have done it I deny not. 'Tis the fact
But whether to thy thought this matricide
Be justified or no, declare thy mind
For information of those present here.
AP. To all here present I will now procl
With perfect truth, Athena's high decree,
And being a seer, I shall not be belied.
I never spake from my prophetic seat
Concerning man or woman, people or state
Save what the father of all gods had bidd
The force hereof 'tis meet ye understand.
Lighten your footsteps by my Father's wil
For 'tis more binding than all oaths.
CHO. And Zeus,
Thou say'st, inspired thee with this oracle,
To tell Orestes yonder he should wreak
His father's death and reck not of his mother?
AP. Of her what recks it, when a man of worth
And worship, honoured with the Zeus-given wand,
Is slaughtered by a woman, by his wife,
Not as by Amazon's far darting bow,
But in such wise, Pallas, as thou shalt hear,
And ye who sit to vote upon this case,
With kindly welcome entertaining him
As he returned with good success from war,
After the bath, when close upon the goal,

She screened him round with a great web, then hacked
Her husband in the inextricable coil.
The fall hath now been told you of the man
Supreme in honour, levier of the fleet;
Told in such terms as must enrage the court
Appointed to determine this great cause.
Cho. Zeus, thou maintainest, takes the father's part.
Did he not bind Cronos, his agèd sire?
Is not this contrary to that? Reply!
And you, ye judges, lend a careful ear.
Ap. Monsters abominable, of Heaven abhorred,
Bonds may be loosed: there's remedy for that,—
Full many a means of healing and release,—
But when Earth's dust hath once drawn in the blood
Of man in death, he riseth up no more.
No charm for this hath my great Sire contrived,
Though in all else his strong omnipotence
Works endless transformation at his will.
Cho. Then look to thy defence of the outcast here.
Shall he, that shed to the earth the dearest blood
Of his true mother, hold his father's hall
In Argos? How should he do sacrifice?
How share the lustral waters of his race?
Ap. That scruple likewise I can satisfy.
She who is called the mother of the child
Is not its parent, but the nurse of seed
Implanted in begetting. He that sows
Is author of the shoot, which she, if Heaven
Prevent not, keeps as in a garden-ground.
In proof whereof, to show that fatherhood
May be without the mother, I appeal
To Pallas, daughter of Olympian Zeus,
In present witness here. Behold a plant,
Not moulded in the darkness of the womb,
Yet nobler than all scions of Heaven's stock.
I, O Athena, both in other ways
Will magnify this people of thy choice
To my best power, and I have sent this man
Orestes, to approach thy hearth, that he
Might evermore be faithful to thy cause,

And thou mightst have him for a firm ally,
And his descendants, and this league might hold
Loyally kept by the posterity
Of these thy citizens to endless time.
ATH. Enough is spoken; now I charge the Court
To vote in truth according to their thought.
CHO. Our quiver is exhausted: we abide
To hear the verdict that decides our cause.
ATH. I would my vote might not displeasure you.
CHO. We have said our say. Strangers, with pious heart
In giving each his vote, observe your oath.
ATH. Athenians, ye who are trying this first cause
Of human bloodshedding, hear my decree.
The people of Aegeus shall for evermore
Maintain this council incorruptible,
This mount of Ares, tabernacle and seat
Of the Amazons, who came in armèd might
Opposing Theseus, and, to thwart his will,
Built here and fortified this virgin rock
And sacrificed to Ares, whence the name
Of Areiopagus; the dread whereof
And awful reverence inbred in the race
By day and night continuing shall restrain
This folk from wrong-doing, whilst the citizens
Avoid rash innovation. Crystal streams
Tainted with clay yield no refreshing draught.
I counsel this my people to revere,
And guard from change, the form of state removed
Alike from anarchy and tyranny,
Not casting forth all terror from the realm.
Since who of mortals, fearing nought, is just?
Standing in awe, then, of this worshipped seat,
With hearts of righteousness, ye shall preserve
A fortress of protection for your land
Mightier than any held by human kind
From Scythia to the isle of Pelops old.
This Court-house inaccessible to wealth
I here inaugurate, swift for redress,
Yet capable of mercy, watching o'er

Poor souls that slumber, warden of the soil.
I have thus prolonged my charge for the behoof
Of mine own citizens in times to be.
Now stand you forth, lift each his voting-ball,
And in decision of this pending suit,
Respect your oaths. There is no more to say.

CHO. Meantime we counsel you, disparage not
Our dangerous presence cleaving to your land.

AP. But I forewarn you, fear mine oracles
And my great Sire's, nor make their issues vain.

CHO. Through wanton furtherance of a blood-staine
cause
Thine oracles are tainted from to-day.

AP. And have my Father's high designs been foiled
Since in Ixion, the first homicide,
He gave protection to a suppliant's head?

CHO. Thou talk'st, but we, if crossed to-day, wi
cling
With dangerous presence to this land.

AP. Your rights
Are scouted by all gods both old and young.
My pleading shall prevail.

CHO. Such was thy course
In Pheres' mansion, when thou didst persuade
The Fates to spare a mortal man his doom.

AP. Should gods not favour their own worshippers
Most when in trouble?

CHO. Thou didst lead astray
Those primal goddesses with draughts of wine,
O'erturning ordinance.

AP. Thou, by and by,
Cast in thy suit, shalt vomit venom of gore
No longer hurtful to thine enemies.

CHO. Young, thou wouldst override our ancien
right.
We wait the issue of our cause, intent
With hovering mind, ready to ban this city.

[*During the above dialogue the* Councillors *ha*
been putting their votes into the urns

ATH. To me it falls to give my judgement last.

Here openly I give it for Orestes.
No mother bore me. To the masculine side
For all save marriage my whole heart is given,—
In all and everything the father's child.
So little care I for a woman's death,
That slew her lord, the guardian of her home.
Now, though the votes be even, Orestes wins.
Come, ye to whom the court hath given this charge,
Draw forth the ballots from the voting urns.

OR. Apollo! which way will the issue prove?

CHO. Night, dark-eyed mother, seest thou what they do?

OR. The hour for death or life to me draws on.

CHO. And ours for ruin or aggrandisement.

AP. Be scrupulous, friends, in numbering either vote,
Parting the sets without dishonesty.
One pebble wanting makes disaster sure,
That, present, would restore prosperity.

ATH. Orestes hath escaped the doom of blood.
In numbering of the lots, both sides are even.

OR. O blest preserver, rescuer of my home,
Pallas, I, long since reft of fatherland,
Am now restored and stablished by thine aid.
The world shall say, He is Argive once again,
And dwells secure with his own patrimony,
Through aid of Pallas and wise Loxias
And Saviour Zeus, third named in sacrifice,
The All-disposer, who preserves my soul,
Moved by compassion for my father's death,
Albeit my mother's advocates stand forth.
Now, then, ere travelling homeward, I proclaim
To all thy people and their land this league
Solemnized by mine oath for evermore;
No prince or potentate of Argive land
Shall marshal hitherward the serried war.
Which bond if any break in the after time,
I, then within my grave, will vex him sore
With strange disasters hard to overbear,
Crossing such enterprise with omens dire
To balk his passage, turning all his toils

To bitterness of soul. But while they keep
And honour this my league with Pallas' town
In firm alliance, they themselves shall feel
The favour of my spirit. Now, farewell.
Athena, fare ye well that hold her town.
Still be your battle fatal to all foes,
Bringing to Athens glory and safety too! [*Exit*

CHO. Ah! Ah! I 1
Young gods, ye have ridden down mine ancient right;
Ye have torn from out my hand
The meed of honour. Wherefore with fell spite
Biding to plague your land
(Woe for mine honour lost!) all-hapless I
From spirit's inmost core
Will send the empoisoned gore,
Venom of vengeance, dripping banefully.
Whence issuing forth amain
Over the sterile plain
A cankerous growth shall cover all the land;
No blade shall spring, no child;
But feuds unreconciled
Stamp the hard soil with life-destroying brand.
To Justice I complain.
Still, still shall I remain
With plagues unbearable to vex their town.
Ah! Ah!
Hard truly is our doom,
Daughters of primal gloom,
Cruelly wronged and barred from bright renown.

ATH. Hearken to me. Be not so grievous wroth.
Ye are not vanquished, for the votes were even,
Honestly given, not meant to slight your worth.
But the clear evidence of Zeus was there,
Witnessed by him who spake the prophecy,
Orestes should be scathless for this deed.
Then give not way to anger, nor inflict
On Athens the dire outcome of your hate,
In all her fields causing sterility
Through rank effusion of a baleful dew,

Showering sharp influence of malignant power,
Withering all germens with unkindly drops.
For I make promise absolute and sure,
Ye shall have glorious shrines and altar-places,
And shelter underground, in this just land,
High throned, and earning homage of this people.

CHO. Ah! Ah! I 2
Young gods, ye have ridden down mine ancient right;
Ye have torn from out my hand
The meed of honour. Wherefore with fell spite
Biding to plague your land
(Woe for mine honour lost!) all-hapless I
From spirit's inmost core
Will send the empoisoned gore,
Venom of vengeance, dripping banefully.
Whence issuing forth amain
Over the sterile plain
A cankerous growth shall cover all the land;
No blade shall spring, no child;
But feuds unreconciled
Stamp the hard soil with life-destroying brand.
To Justice I complain.
Still, still shall I remain
With plagues unbearable to vex their town.
Ah! Ah!
Hard truly is our doom,
Daughters of primal gloom,
Cruelly wronged and barred from bright renown.

ATH. Ye are not disgraced, then do not, being divine,
Make barren for poor mortals their deep soil.
On Zeus I fix reliance. Why say more?
I only of the Olympian powers can use
The key that opes the close-sealed treasure-house
Wherein the lightning-bolts are stored away.
Yet shall they not be needful. Thou wilt yield
To kind persuasion, and not launch the curse
Of barrenness on all fruit-bearing things.
Lull the dark billows of thy bitter mood
To share mine honours and my dwelling-place;

And thou shalt find, as thy first-fruits come
From this wide region, both of marriage dues
And child-birth offerings, good cause to bless
Eternally this utterance of my tongue.

CHO. Woe! for my grievous wrong!
This time-outwearied heart to dwell in gloom,
Unhonoured and abhorred!
I pant with fury, breathing nought but hate.
O Earth, Earth, Earth! woe! woe!
What inward pang is shooting through my bre
O mother Night, hear thou our anger's voice!
Our ancient honour and prerogative
Gods with their crafty wiles have crushed to n

ATH. I will seek to soothe your rage; ye are far.
Yet though ye are older and more sage than I,
Me, too, hath Zeus made wise in my degree.
Then hear my warning. Passing hence abroad
Ye will feel passionate longing for this land.
For to these citizens in time to come
The tide of glory shall not ebb. And ye,
Seated in state beside Erechtheus' dome,
From crowds of men and women shall receive
More than ye could from all the world beside.
But lay not on the region of my choice
Bloody incitements, marring spirits of youth,
Maddening their minds with fumes, but not wine;
Nor pricking them at heart like fighting-cocks
Goad them to fury of intestine broils,
Kin daring kin to the utterance in set fight.
War from without is ready (and welcome be it!)
To kindle man's dread passion for renown.
But let my birds be tame at home, say I.
Such noble gifts are thine to accept from me,
That, blessing, blest and worshipped, thou shoul dwell,
My partner ...

CHO. Woe! for my grievous wrong! II 2
This time-outwearied heart to dwell in gloom,
Unhonoured and abhorred!
I pant with fury, breathing nought but hate.
O Earth, Earth, Earth! woe! woe!
What inward pang is shooting through my breast?
O mother Night, hear thou our anger's voice!
Our ancient honour and prerogative,
Gods with their crafty wiles have crushed to nought.

ATH. I will not weary telling you of good;
Lest ye should say that I, younger in birth,
Had chased with scorn your elder deities;
And this my people, a firm-stablished race,
From their fair city had rejected you.
If aught you reverence sweet Persuasion's power,
Or my tongue's mildness soften you at all,
You will bide here: but if you will not stay,
You will not justly send upon this town
Vengeance or spite, nor plague her populace,
Since with full rights and honours unimpaired,
'Tis yours to dwell and have your portion here.

CHO. Athena, tell, what portion shall we have?
ATH. One freed from all annoy. Reject it not.
CHO. Say I receive it. Then, what dues are mine?
ATH. No home without thee shall be fortunate.
CHO. Wilt thou secure me such authority?
ATH. Prospering all fortunes for thy worshippers.
CHO. Wilt thou assure this for all time to come?
ATH. Why should I promise, if I would not pay?
CHO. I feel thou art moving me. My rage subsides.
ATH. You will stay and win affection in this land?
CHO. Then wouldst thou have me chant mine auspices?

ATH. Chant, if you sing the triumph of all good.
Chant of sweet airs that from the earth and sea
And breathed from Heaven beneath a wholesome sun
Visit this land. Chant of rich harvest days,
Of cattle never failing to bring forth,
Of foison with the seasons multiplied,

Of human generations sound and whole!
I, like a prudent gardener, desire
No blight to oppress my righteous nurslings here.
Such are your dues. And in the heat of war
Where honours thicken, I will evermore
Crown with new triumph this world-conquering Sta

CHORUS.

I give consent to dwell with Pallas here,
Nor scorn the sacred race,
Whose town high Zeus and he who guides the spe
Have chosen, their holy place,
Stronghold of heavenly powers, to Grecian gods mo
dear,
Guard of all altars, on whose life I pray,
With gentlest augury,
Kind Helios still may shed his brightest ray,
Trebling prosperity,
Still gendering from the ground new comfort each ne
day.

ATH. In my zeal for the men of this town, with the
Powers ever hard to entreat
I make league and establish them here, in a gloom
and awful retreat.
For o'er all that is human they wield a majestic a
fatal control,
And the man that hath felt not their anger a burdeno
weight on his soul,
Knoweth nought of the springs of disaster: his si
of the past have in charge
To hale him before these for judgement; yea ev
while he seemeth at large,
And is high-voiced in vaunting, the engine of wrath
destruction, at hand,
Waits in silence to grind him to powder, and swe
him away from the land.

CHO. No blighting blast shall breathe upon t
trees,
Such boon my bounty yields,

No mildew come to check the grain's increase
Invading their tilled fields;
No dire abortive influence waste them with disease!
But life-supporting Earth in season due
Still without fail shall bear
The grazing flocks, each early-teeming ewe
Graced with her eanling pair,
While gold from Earth's own womb shall God-sent wealth declare.

ATH. Have ye heard, O ye guardians of Athens, what destiny lives in that sound?
For the voice of Erinys hath power both in Heaven and with gods underground.
And to some she makes life ever joyous and loud with the thanksgiving hymn,
While *for others* the light is o'erclouded, with heart-broken weeping made dim.

CHO. *Untimely violent deaths be far from hence,* II 1
Cull not this people's flower;
And grant, ye gods appointed to dispense
Riches from Hymen's dower,
Men to fair maids, well suited each to other,
Grant it, *dread Fates, own sisters of our mother,*
Ye that o'er every home wield righteous power—
With ever worshipped sway
Pressing on mortal life from hour to hour
From burdened day to day,—
Honoured above all gods *in your unswerving sway.*

ATH. I am gladdened to think that your land hath *these destinies fixed by their zeal,*
And I give to the power of Persuasion heart-affluent thanks, for I feel
She has ruled my discourse and my converse towards these who were stubbornly bent
To repel all advance. But high Zeus hath his town-shielding augury lent,
Reinforcing the cause that was righteous. Thus ever for good we conspire

And ever prevail in that strife,—the Olympian daughte
and sire.

CHO. Far, too, from hence be heard the ravenou
roar II :
Of wild-beast Faction's voice:
Let not the darkening dust, drinking red gore
Of citizens, rejoice
In wreaking death for death, new vengeance sowing
But ever may the genial interflowing
Of mirth for mirth, kindness for kindness, fill
All souls within the state,
With unanimity of mild good will,
And firm harmonious hate.
Full many a public ill that medicine shall abate.

ATH. Perceive ye the path of their counsel, the
wisdom that flows from their tongue?
Great gain from these terrible Forms will be yours when,
your temples among,
Their countenance looks on your city. While ye shall
with loyalty cling
To their worship, and load them with honour, the
blessings their bounty shall bring
Will exalt you. Your city and nation will shine to
the world through all time,
As the lovers and doers of justice, the foes and avoiders
of crime.

CHO. Hail, all hail! May all your store III 1
Fit your need for evermore,
People of the favoured town
Nestled 'neath the sheltering down
Of Pallas' wings! Her mighty Sire
Regards your shield and checks his ire.
Timely have ye ta'en your part
With the daughter of his heart.

ATH. All hail to you likewise! Behoves that I lead
you and point you the road
To your chamber of lasting repose, lighted on to that
solemn abode

By this train of your holy conductors. Then while we do sacrifice here
Go, and passing beneath, be ye watchful henceforth in each onset of fear
To keep under all harm for the land, and send forth for the good of my town
All advantage that tends to true honour, and ends in triumphant renown.
Then, ye children of Cranaüs, dwellers in Athens, conduct the new band
That receives now and renders protection, abiding henceforth in your land.
Last, I pray that for ever henceforward the strain of my citizens' thought
May be holy, and steeped in all virtue, and issue in good as it ought.

Cho. Hail, all hail,—we say it again,— III 2
Holy powers and mortal men,
All that hold the blessèd town
Which Athena's glories crown!
For while our presence ye revere
In our new home established here,
All your hap that is to be
Shall be pure prosperity.

[The ceremonial follows, with prayer and incense

Ath. My heart approves the tenor of those prayers,
And now by flaming torchlight I will lead you
To your appointed place below the ground,
With these attendants, whose religious care
Preserves mine image. To the central spot
Of all the land of Theseus, a fair troop,
Boys, maids, and agèd matrons, shall arrive
Robed in rich vestments all of purple grain.
Advance the torch-flame and illume the way,
That this new company henceforth may dwell
Propitious here, and make this country great.

[The procession is formed

ATTENDANTS. Come home, this way come, I 1
Great children of darkness, aye childless, descend to congenial gloom!
The tribute of worship ye long for is firmly secured here above.
And we lead you with love.
HERALD. Hush!
Keep silence, ye folk, one and all!

ATTEND. Come away, come away! I 2
In primaeval recesses of Earth ye shall hide from importunate Day—
Where hallowed with worship and homage, and savour of sacrifice slain,
Ye for aye shall remain.
HER. All ye people, be hushed at my call!

ATTEND. Then come, ye dread powers, kind and faithful to Athens, nor waken to wrath; II 1
Come hither, be cheered by the flame, pine-consuming, that lightens your path.
HER. Shout, ye folk, a new age hath begun!

ATTEND. Torch-illumined libations henceforward the people of Pallas shall bring II 2
To your dwelling—so Fate hath made compact with Zeus the Olympian King.
HER. Shout, ye people, the chanting is done!

PROMETHEUS BOUND

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA

(All superhuman).

POWER and VIOLENCE. *The latter does not speak.*
HEPHAESTUS.
PROMETHEUS.
CHORUS *of Ocean Nymphs.*
OCEANUS.
IO.
HERMES.

The SCENE is in a rocky wilderness to the north of Scythia.

TIME—Primaeval.

In the Oresteian trilogy the wild justice of the early world has given place to Equity under the jurisdiction of Athena and her Areopagites. Through her civilizing influence the very nature of those ancient goddesses, the Erinyes, has been modified, and they are now the Eumenides, a beneficent, not a destructive power. This may prepare us for a further reach of imagination, viz. the bold suggestion that Zeus himself had not always been the beneficent equitable ruler in whom the Athenians believed, but had learned wisdom through experience. Aeschylus figures to himself a time of spiritual chaos, in which not only the elemental passions of humanity, but the very elements of deity, were not yet harmonized, but conflicting. He is thus enabled more impressively to make it felt that it is in the union of power and wisdom, of energy and beneficence, that true Godhead, the impersonation of Righteousness, consists.

In attempting to give expression to this thought, he was assisted by some mythologies, which told that in the supreme region there had formerly been change and succession. Nay, it was whispered, as in the myth of Prometheus, that Zeus had once been a malignant ruler. That dim tradition was the outcome of an age when men's conception of the Highest had been a creature of their fear. We know from the story of Mycerinus, and from the words of Solon in Herodotus, i. 32 ('God is envious and loves to make confusion'), that such notions had been powerful in earlier times, and had been revived and accentuated by Ionian pessimism. The legend of Prometheus (whatever may have been its origin) conveyed the superstitious dread with which a rude conservatism regarded the inventor, as one who by sheer force of mind transcends the appointed limits of the human lot, and makes the divine powers of nature subservient to the wants of mortals. But the legend, so conceived, implied a stage of culture which the Athenian imagination, immature as it still was in some respects, had far outgrown. And Aeschylus tells his spectators in effect, 'This happened, indeed, but under an earlier dispensation. And it involved a contrariety which could not last. For Power rejecting Wisdom must come to nought,

and Wisdom rebelling against Power is fettered and manacled. Omnipotence, to be eternal, must be at one with wisdom and beneficence; in a word, must be just. And because power, alone and unaccompanied, is brittle and transient, wisdom and beneficence are co-eternal with almighty Power.'

The old fable is therefore now recast as follows:—'There was a time when the authority of Zeus was not yet finally secured. In accordance with the presage of Themis, Goddess of Right, Zeus the son of Cronos had subdued the Anarchs of the Past, not by brute violence, but by the help of Forethought, which the Titans had despised. But having won the heavenly throne, he was liable to the disease of self-will that is naturally incident to every irresponsible ruler, and began to exercise his power without regard to the wisdom which had gained it for him; while towards mortals he exhibited an excessive harshness. But to these courses the irrepressible spirit of Wisdom was opposed, and, in spite of Zeus, succeeded in obtaining gifts for men.

'So long as the struggle lasted, the sovereignty of Zeus was imperilled. *And thus the Fates were heard to whisper.* On the other hand, had the opposition remained, Wisdom must have been held in lasting bonds.

'But Wisdom knew the secret word, which solitary Power had failed to apprehend, and Necessity at last made Power submit to learn the truth *from Wisdom*. Thus Zeus was saved from fatal error, and his reign thenceforward became identical with that growth of Justice in the world which must ultimately subdue all moral discord.'

In dramatic contrast to the principal figure, and helping to draw out the *gentleness which accompanies his strength*, are the daughters of Oceanus (sisters of his wife Hesionè), who come to visit him; and Io, the ancestress of Heracles his future deliverer, and the female victim of the oppression and caprice of Zeus. As the daughter of Inachus, the river-god, she is also near of kin to the Oceanides. These persons, and also that of Oceanus himself on his 'four-footed bird,' give occasion for various excursions into the region of mythological geography, in which the Athenians of the age preceding Pericles manifestly took great delight. And although these episodes delay the action, the grand manner in which Aeschylus unfolds them has an undying charm. The same motive was repeated in the *Prometheus*

Unbound, where Prometheus foretold the wanderings of Heracles. But we miss the concentrated passion of the *Choephoroe*, and feel, in reading this drama, as if we were thrown back upon an earlier phase of art. It would be rash, however, to conclude from this that the Promethean trilogy was composed before the Oresteia. It is precisely in dealing with the superhuman that high poetry, from Homer to Milton, has been apt to flag and falter, and if the *Prometheus Bound* does savour here and there rather of the Morality or Mystery than of Tragedy proper, it was hardly to be expected that the great advance made in grappling with the horrors of the House of Atreus should be evenly maintained when the poet entered on a wholly different sphere.

Nor is it to be supposed that the taste of the Athenian audience could be maintained at the height of tragic sympathy to which Cassandra, Clytemnestra, and Electra had for the moment raised it. The plot of the *Eumenides* shows that there was still an element of puerility, if not of childishness, in the popular fancy to which the soaring mind of Aeschylus had to appeal. In all probability the grounds of the reconcilement between Zeus and Prometheus were not less archaic, and, if the *Prometheus Unbound* of Aeschylus had been preserved, would have proved equally disappointing to the modern reader.

PROMETHEUS BOUND

POWER, (VIOLENCE), HEPHAESTUS.

POW. We are come to Earth's far limit—to a land
Untrodden, save by wandering Scythians,
A lifeless wilderness. Fire-god! 'tis thine
To execute the mandate of our sire
And yoke this felon to yon beetling cliff,
Pinned fast in adamantine bonds. Thy pride,
Fire,—sovran secret of all arts,—he stole
And lavished on frail mortals. Such the sin
Wherefor he must receive Heaven's recompense,
That he may learn to accept the almighty sway
Of Zeus, and cease befriending humankind.
HEPH. O Power and Violence, your charge from Zeus
Is all accomplished, and your path is clear:
But I am full of heaviness. My heart
Shrinks from this task,—to bind a kindred god
With violent hand to yon storm-cloven ravine!
Yet must I steel my spirit to this deed:
Slackness is dangerous where Zeus commands.
Deep-thoughted son of Themis wise in heart,
Against my will and thine, with fetters forged
Indissolubly, shall I nail thee here
To a man-forsaken crag. No human voice
Nor form shall greet thee: but the Sun's pure bea
Shall bake and blacken thine all-radiant bloom,
That when the star-curtained Night shall hide
Heaven's holy light, glad shalt thou be; and glad
When Helios dries the rimy dews of dawn.—
Still wearied with the stress of present woe,
For none hath being who shall comfort thee.
Such fruit thou reapest from befriending man.
Daring the wrath of thine own race divine,

Unbound, where Prometheus foretold the wanderings of Heracles. But we miss the concentrated passion of the *Choephoroe,* and feel, in reading this drama, as if we were thrown back upon an earlier phase of art. It would be rash, however, to conclude from this that the Promethean trilogy was composed before the Oresteia. It is precisely in dealing with the superhuman that high poetry, from Homer to Milton, has been apt to flag and falter, and if the *Prometheus Bound* does savour here and there rather of the Morality or Mystery than of Tragedy proper, it was hardly to be expected that the great advance made in grappling with the horrors of the House of Atreus should be evenly maintained when the poet entered on a wholly different sphere.

Nor is it to be supposed that the taste of the Athenian audience could be maintained at the height of tragic sympathy to which Cassandra, Clytemnestra, and Electra had for the moment raised it. The plot of the *Eumenides* shows that there was still an element of puerility, if not of childishness, in the popular fancy to which the soaring mind of Aeschylus had to appeal. In all probability the grounds of the reconcilement between Zeus and Prometheus were not less archaic, and, if the *Prometheus Unbound* of Aeschylus had been preserved, would have proved equally disappointing to the modern reader.

PROMETHEUS BOUND

Power, (Violence), Hephaestus.

Pow. We are come to Earth's far limit—to a land
Untrodden, save by wandering Scythians,
A lifeless wilderness. Fire-god! 'tis thine
To execute the mandate of our sire
And yoke this felon to yon beetling cliff,
Pinned fast in adamantine bonds. Thy pride,
Fire,—sovran secret of all arts,—he stole
And lavished on frail mortals. Such the sin
Wherefor he must receive Heaven's recompense,
That he may learn to accept the almighty sway
Of Zeus, and cease befriending humankind.
Heph. O Power and Violence, your charge from Zeus
Is all accomplished, and your path is clear:
But I am full of heaviness. My heart
Shrinks from this task,—to bind a kindred god
With violent hand to yon storm-cloven ravine!
Yet must I steel my spirit to this deed:
Slackness is dangerous where Zeus commands.
Deep-thoughted son of Themis wise in heart,
Against my will and thine, with fetters forged
Indissolubly, shall I nail thee here
To a man-forsaken crag. No human voice
Nor form shall greet thee: but the Sun's pure beam
Shall bake and blacken thine all radiant bloom,
That when the star-enrobed Night shall hide
Heaven's holy light, glad shalt thou be; and glad
When Helios dries the rimy dews of dawn:—
Still wearied with the stress of present woe,
For none hath being who shall comfort thee.
Such fruit thou reapest from befriending man.
Daring the wrath of thine own race divine,

To men thou gavest rights beyond their due.
Wherefore thou still shalt guard this joyless glen,
A dreary sentinel, ne'er bending knee,
Erect and sleepless. Many a piteous moan
And many a deep-drawn sigh shall sound from thee
Bootless; for Zeus is deaf to intercession,
And young in power is ever harsh in will.
  POW. Well, then, why be compassionate and dwell
On vain procrastination? Why not hate
The god most hateful to all gods, who gave
By treason your bright glory to frail men?
  HEPH. Kindred and comradeship have fearful power.
  POW. I grant ye. But more fearful 'tis to spurn
Our father's bidding. Tremble and obey!
  HEPH. Thou art ever ruthless and o'er-confident.
  POW. Lamenting him availeth not to save.
Trouble not thyself, where trouble is all in vain.
  HEPH. Mysterious handicraft, O how I hate thee!
  POW. Why hate your mystery? To phrase it clear,
Your craft is blameless for your toil to-day.
  HEPH. Howbeit, I would it never had been mine.
  POW. All lots are hard, but to be King of Heaven:
The rest are bondslaves—Zeus alone is free.
  HEPH. This errand proves it. I am dumb.
  POW. Go to!
Enring him with his fetters, lest our lord
Spy thee neglecting his command.
  HEPH. Behold!
His armlets here are ready.
  POW. Take them, and
With mighty sledge-hammer smite them around
His elbows; rivet him fast to the rock.
  HEPH. That work proceeds, nor is it idly done.
  POW. Beat harder, pinch him tight, leave nothing loose:
He'd find his way out at an auger-hole.
  HEPH. This arm is fast beyond all conjuring forth.
  POW. Now clasp the other no less firm; that he
May know his wisdom feebler than our Sire's.
  HEPH. None but Prometheus can find fault with me

Pow. Now then, with all thy might drive through his chest
The fierce tusk of the adamantine wedge.

Herm. Alas! I groan, Prometheus, for thy pain.

Pow. Again thou shrinkest, and for Heaven's foe
Dost groan. Thou'lt pity thine own case one day.
Beware!

Herm. And can thine eye behold this sight?

Pow. I see a rebel reaping his deserts.
Come, put the girths about his ribs.

Herm. I must!
What needs thy vehemence?

Pow. I'll use it though,
And hound thee, too, with cries. Go down and ring
His ankles, laying force upon his legs.

Herm. 'Tis done. That called for no protracted toil.

Pow. Now clinch with mighty strokes the rivet-bolts.
A rigid overseer overlooks thy work.

Herm. Grim as thy form is the utterance of thy tongue.

Pow. Melt thou, an' if thou must; but chide not me
For my harsh mood and unrelenting mind.

Herm. His limbs have all their casings. Let us go.

Pow. (*to* Prom.) There vent thine insolence, and reaving gods
Of rights, bestow them on frail-dated man!
Which of thy woes can [illegible]?
'Fore-thinker' art thou falsely named in Heaven,
Since here thou hast need of one to think for thee
How to unwind the coil thou art made sure.
[*Exeunt all but* Prometheus.

Prom. Ether of Heaven and Winds untired of wing,
Rivers, whose fountains fail not, and thou Sea,
Laughing in waves innumerable, O Earth,
All-Mother!—Yea, and on the Sun I call,
Whose orb scans all things, [illegible] on me and see
How I, a god, am wronged by gods. Behold
How torn with outrage I must remain
Through countless ages wrestling against pain.

Such means iniquitous to hold me bound
Hath this new ruler of the immortals found.
Ay me!
Woes that are here, and woes that are to come
Afflict my spirit. Vast, unending gloom!
What light shall bring a limit to my doom?
What am I saying? All is known to me,
All, all that is to be;—nor with fresh smart
Shall one pang smite me. Then let me endure
My destiny as I may, knowing that none
May e'er bid battle to Necessity.
Yet how be silent o'er my lot? How speak
What is befallen? Because I gave to men
Gifts claimed of gods, I am bound in durance here.
Charging therewith the hollow of a reed,
I caught, by stealth, of fire a secret spring,
That proved a boon full of resource for men,
Best tutor in all arts. For such offence
This punishment ineffable I bear,
Fast riveted in bonds beneath the sky.
Ah! Ah! What is here?
What sound this way wafted, what odour unseen,
Hath reached me, from god, man, or nature between?
Who to this craggy bourne of the world can have come
Bent to view my distress, or how moved here to roam?
Ye see me prisoned here, a god ill-starred,
Of Zeus the enemy, hated of all
That tread the courts of his omnipotence,
Because of mine exceeding love for men.
Ay me! Again
What rustling of pinions, what wide-hovering bird,
One or more, is at hand, that great Ether is stirred
With soft whirring of plumes? I am shaken with fear
At each moving thing that comes near.

CHORUS (*entering above*). I 1

[illegible], fear us not! With love we near thy scaur,
[illegible] eager-wingèd car,
[illegible]ing in fleetness with the following wind
[illegible]at with kind convoy sped me fast and far.
[illegible]ce deep within our cave the echoed clang
[illegible] smitten steel amazed us as it rang,
[illegible]aring demure-eyed shame, that forth we flew,
[illegible]ardly prevailing on our father's mind,
Unsandalled.
PROM. Ah! ye children ever true
Of plenteous-teeming Tethys, and of him
Who enrings the land with ever rolling rim,
Unaltered from of old,
Ocean, unwearied Father—look! behold
How, clasped to towering cliffs with fetters hard,
O'er this ravine I mount un[illegible] guard. I 2

CHO. I see, Prometheus, and a mist of tears,
Exhaled from tender fears,
Hath filled mine eyes, when I behold thy form
Thus withering in the sun glare and the storm,
To that bare cliff with bonds of insult tied:
Since new be they that guide
The heavenly helm; Zeus with uncouth decrees
Old ordinance hath altered at his ease,
And hoary might be [illegible] deified.
PROM. Would he had buried me far below the ground,
Beyond dark Pluto's realm, where ghosts abound,
To utmost Tartarus' unfathomed gloom,
How savagely soe'er, with changeless doom!
There, out of sight and mind, I were exempt
From Heaven and Earth's contempt.
Now, swung aloft, an [illegible]
Each pang I suffer gives [illegible] enemy joy.

CHO. Lives in all Heaven one so hard of heart
To joy at what we see?
What spirit doth not feelingly take part
With thy deep misery?

Save Zeus, who pitilessly still
Fixing on wrath his furious will
Subdues the race of Heaven; nor will he cease,
Till sated with destruction he find ease,
Or some one, by a strange unlooked-for blow,
His sovran power impregnable o'erthrow.
PROM. Ay, though he be Heaven's potentate, and I
Limb-fettered in stern bonds remorselessly,
Yet shall he need mine aid to bring to light
The plot that reaves from him his boasted right.
But neither honey-tongued persuasive charm,
Nor all the scathing terrors of his arm
Shall bring me to reveal it, till he choose
From these heart-galling bonds my limbs to loose,
And recompense my soul-dishonouring harm.

CHO. Thou yieldest nought to pain and bitter wrong, II 2
And of thy speech art free,—
Too free of speech, contending with the strong!
But dread hath seized on me,
Piercing my heart with anxious fears,
Where in the waste of countless years
Thou shalt see land and bring thy bark to shore.
For who may nerve his spirit to implore
The heart of Zeus; what voyager may find
The undiscovered pathway to his mind?
PROM. I know him ruthless, measuring right and good
Ever by what he wills; yet shall his mood
Be softened, when this blow shall break him down.
Then shall the settled frown
Be smoothed upon his brow to gentle peace;
Then shall his anger cease,
And both our hearts, that after vengeance yearned,
To love and loyal friendship shall be turned.
CHO. Unveil and voice to us the whole dark truth;
Upon what charge hath Zeus arrested thee,
And wreaked on thee these dire indignities?
Inform us, if thou mayest without more harm.

Prom. Even to tell of it is pain, and yet
Silence is pain:—misery every way!
When first the wrath of gods began to rise,
And Faction reared her crest in Heaven, one part
Minded to oust old Cronos, that forsooth
Zeus might be lord; others, with equal heat,
Contending, Zeus should never rule in Heaven;—
I, at that point, instructing for the best
The Titan offspring of great Earth and Sky,
Could not persuade them, but their giant thought,
Proudly disdaining my ingenious wiles,
Vaunted of victory by simple force.
Without more toil. But I, not once alone,
Had hearkened to my mother's prophecies
(Themis or Earth, one nature, howe'er named),
That not by strength or violent assault,
But through contrivance should the victory come
And the issue be determined. With such words
I warned them, but they looked another way.
Best then it seemed of courses in my view,
Supported by my mother to stand forth,
Willing and welcome aids of Zeus's throne.
Therefore, because my counsel pleased him then,
The deep and darksome hold of Tartarus
Hides ancient Cronos and his host of friends.
Such benefit that tyrant of the gods
Rewards with this unequal recompense.
Suspicion is a vice ingrained in kings.
Now, for your question, moved by what offence
He thus torments me, I will make that clear.
Once planted in his father's seat of power,
He ranged his realm in provinces, and gave
To divers gods their several dignities.
But of the poor distressful race of men
He took no thought:—nay, 'twas his fixed intent
To blot them from the world, and bring to birth
Another brood of creatures in their room.
This plan none hindered, none opposed, but I.
I dared to cross him, and redeem mankind
From ruin and the abyss of nothingness.

Therefore I thus am bowed with chastisement,
Painful to bear and piteous to be seen.
Compassionating mortals in my heart,
Myself refused compassion, to the shame
Of Him in heaven, I stand corrected here.

CHO. Of stony mould and steel-made heart were he,
Prometheus, whom thy suffering melted not.
I had shrunk erewhile from the mere thought of that
The sight whereof wrings me with inmost woe.

PROM. To friendly eyes I am a sight of pain.

CHO. Say, was there more? Hast thou told all thy sin?

PROM. I took from man the expectancy of Death.

CHO. What cure hadst thou invented for that ill?

PROM. Blind hopes, which I established in his heart.

CHO. A mighty boon thou gavest mortals there.

PROM. Yet further, I provided them with fire.

CHO. Fire to frail man? Have mortals radiant fire?

PROM. Yea, and therefrom shall compass various skill.

CHO. And on this charge does Zeus torment thee now
With ignominious bondage and strong pain?
And is no limit set for thy release?

PROM. No limit but the day of his desire.

CHO. When should that dawn? What hope? Ah, seest thou not
How wrong thou wert? How deeply wrong, 'twere pain
For us to speak and thee to hear. Let be!
But try some course for gaining thy reprieve.

PROM. How easy, when the foot is free from harm,
To counsel and admonish the unhappy!
I knew it all beforehand. Mine offence
Was wilful. I avouch it willingly.
Rescuing mankind, I plunged myself in woe.
Yet could I not imagine he would wreak
His anger in such pains as here I suffer,
Withering against this air-poised crag, inheriting

This savage rock in desert solitude!
Howbeit, lament not for my present ills,
But setting foot on ground, hear me relate
The evil coming on, that ye may learn
My fortunes to their end. Grant my request,
Show kindness to him now in misery,
Knowing that sorrow, ever wandering round,
Visits in turn all bosoms at her will.

CHO. With desire we obey thy command,
[illegible]nd with light foot thus leaving our fast-flying chair,
[illegible]nd the highway of eagles, the smooth stainless air,
[illegible]e alight on the rock roughened land
[illegible]e full course of thy woes and their end we would fain
understand. [*They descend to the rocks* [illegible]

Enter [illegible] *mounted on a griffin* [illegible], having trave[illegible] a tedious road,

OCEAN. I am come, having [illegible]
To [illegible] Prometheus, [illegible] winged steed
Directing the flight of [illegible] hath need.
By my thought, for [illegible] I bid thee know,
That I rue thy torment [illegible] compels me so.
Both law of kindred [illegible] whose part
And, akin or stranger, [illegible] in my steadfast heart
Is more than thine in my [illegible] and see,
For more assurance, try me and see,
Idly to flatter is not in me
Only declare what deed of mine [illegible]
May stead thee, or further thy [illegible] true
And thou never shalt tell that [illegible] friend more true
Thou hast found than [illegible] Art thou too, [illegible]

PROM. Ha! What [illegible] to explore
This agony? How [illegible] stream
Called after thee and [illegible] Earth,
Thy workmanship [illegible]
Mother of iron? [illegible] thy [illegible]
And harrow up thy spirit with my woes?
[illegible] hold a pageant of ingratitude
[illegible] friend of Zeus, that helped him to his throne
[illegible]wed with such pangs as [illegible]

OCEAN. Yea, and it moves me, O Prometheus mine,
To counsel thee, deep thinker though thou art.
Learn thine own weakness, and conform thy ways
To his new government who rules in Heaven.
For if thou flingest abroad such bitter speech,
So harsh and vehement, though Zeus sit high
Yet might he hear thee, and the wrath to be
Make child's-play of thy present agonies.
Unhappy one, bid angry passion cease,
And seek remission from thy misery.
Find'st thou an old-world cadence in my words?
Most like! but yet in truth the recompense
Of too bold speech is even what I say.
And thou art still unhumbled, unsubdued,
And goest the way to make misfortune more.
But not, if I might be thy counsellor,
Shouldst thou strike back against the goad. Severe
Is he who rules, responsible to none.
I, howsoe'er, will go and do my best
To win enlargement and relief for thee;
If only thou wilt hold thee still and cease
From stormy virulence. Knowest thou not well,
Being excellent in wisdom, that restraint
Still presses sorely on the unbridled tongue?
PROM. I envy thee thy freedom from this blame,
Though in mine enterprise thou too hadst part.
But let it be, set thy good heart at rest.
Thou canst not move him: he is inexorable.
See rather lest thine errand bring thee pain.
OCEAN. Thou art wiser to admonish other minds
Than prudent for thyself: I see that well.
But pull not back me who am bent to go.
Zeus, I am confident, will grant me this
Indulgence, to release thee from thy bond.
PROM. I still must praise thy purpose. Thy staunch soul
Lacks nought of zealous love. But spare thy toil:
Idle thy labour, nought availing me.
Hold thyself quiet, out of sorrow's way.
What though I suffer? [illegible]

happiness to ravage far and wide?
t so. My Brother Atlas' woes afflict me,
10, stationed by the region of the west,
bears the pillar of the Universe,
rixt Earth and Heaven, upon his shoulders broad,
holiday load. Another have I seen
I mourned for, erst the Earth-born denizen
vast Cilician caves, that monster-foe,
w forcibly subdued by power supreme,
ad hundred-throated Typhon unappalled,
at stood erect against the heavenly host,
sing red slaughter from his horrid jaws,
ile lurid lightnings flashed from forth his eyes,
he would storm of Zeus the sovran throne.
But the ne'er-slumbering firebolt, neezing flame,
Zeus' javelin, descending on him there,
Down smote him from his pinnacle of pride,
And scathed his strength to ashes. Who to-day,
Stricken to the core, lies by the narrow sea
A paralyzed and ineffectual bulk,
Pressed beneath Aetna's rock-root; whereabove,
Under the summit, at his forge unseen,
Hephaestus sits, hammering the massive ore.
Thence one day shall break forth rivers of fire,
Devouring with all devastating jaws
Fair-fruited Sicily's smooth acreage;
Such turbulent wrath shall boil from Typhon's breast,
Though burnt to cinders by Heaven's thunder-stone!
But thou, let wisdom save thee,—thou know'st how—
Thy deep experience needs no counsellor;
Let me wear out my bondage, till the heart
Of Zeus be lightened of its angry load.

OCEAN. Yet know'st thou not, Prometheus, that wise words
Are healers of the heart's distemperature?

PROM. Yea, words in season soothingly addressed,
Not checking with crude force the heaving mind.

OCEAN. But from wise care and daring well-bethought
What damage canst thou apprehend? I would know.

PROM. I see in this nought but enormous folly
And labour to no purpose.
OCEAN. Let me suffer
Beneath that blame; for to be wise, and seem
Futile and foolish, ofttimes serves one well.
PROM. I shall be credited with this offence.
OCEAN. That argument is plain, and warns me home.
PROM. Your plaint for me would win you hatred there.
OCEAN. Mean'st thou with him whose newly-stablished throne
Is now almighty?
PROM. Yea, with him. Beware,
If once his wrath be kindled.
OCEAN. Thy sad plight,
Prometheus, is my beacon.
PROM. Then begone.
Let this thy wiser purpose hold.
OCEAN. I go
Even while thy voice thrills in my listening ear;
My wingèd quadruped begins to beat
Thin Aether with broad pinion, and would fain
Repose him in the stable whence he flew.
[*Exit* OCEANUS

CHORUS.

I mourn, Prometheus, for thy ruinous woe. I 1
And moisten all my cheek with warm soft rain
From sad eyes' overflow.
Past sufferance is the oppression and the pain;
Since Zeus, by self-made laws ruling amain
'Gainst gods that once were great a conqueror's pride doth show.

All lands send forth one universal groan, I 2
Weeping thy goodness and thy brethren's glory
With loud resounding moan,
For your high pageants and your grandeur hoary:
Those mortals from the west begin the story
Whom Asia shelters near her sacred throne.

II 1
They too lament thy mournful plight,
That hold the well-fenced Colchian height,
A warrior host of maidens unsubdued,
And Scythian hordes, that range around
Maeotis' pool, Earth's utmost bound.

II 2
And wild Arabia's martial flower,
Who man the cliff-o'ertopping tower
Mid stern Caucasian solitude,
A serried front of spearmen good,
With war-whoop hard to be withstood.

III 1
One Titan only heretofore I saw
With outrage infinite of gods opprest,
Atlas, on whose sustaining sinews rest
The heavens, that roll by Fate's resistless law.

III 2
But now thy doom the clashing waves resound,
The deep bewails it to the echoing shore,
Dark Hades mutters from Earth's pit profound,
And springs of sacred streams thy piteous pains deplore.

PROM. Misconstrue not my silence. 'Tis not pride,
Nor daintiness, but thought that tears my heart,
When I behold the scorn that spurns me here.
Yet who but I to these new deities
Gave and determined each prerogative?
Of that I speak not; for ye know it. But learn
How grievous were the woes of humankind,
Wherefrom I raised them, furnishing with thought
Their fancies infantile and reasonings crude.
I speak not this to offend them, but to prove
The richness of those blessings I bestowed.
They had eyes and saw not, ears and could not hear,
But mingled all things dreamwise hitherto,
Knowing nought of brick-framed homes, courting the sun,
Nor woodcraft. But they dwelt, like the insect hosts,
In burrows underground. No certain sign
Had they of winter, or the flowery spring,
Or fruitful summer. All their works were wrought
Without perception, till I made them know

PROM. I see in this nought but enormous folly
And labour to no purpose.

OCEAN. Let me suffer
Beneath that blame; for to be wise, and seem
Futile and foolish, ofttimes serves one well.

PROM. I shall be credited with this offence.

OCEAN. That argument is plain, and warns me home

PROM. Your plaint for me would win you hatred there.

OCEAN. Mean'st thou with him whose newly-stablished throne
Is now almighty?

PROM. Yea, with him. Beware,
If once his wrath be kindled.

OCEAN. Thy sad plight,
Prometheus, is my beacon.

PROM. Then begone.
Let this thy wiser purpose hold.

OCEAN. I go
Even while thy voice thrills in my listening ear;
My wingèd quadruped begins to beat
Thin Aether with broad pinion, and would fain
Repose him in the stable whence he flew.

[*Exit* OCEANUS

CHORUS.

I mourn, Prometheus, for thy ruinous woe, I 1
And moisten all my cheek with warm soft rain
From sad eyes' overflow.
Past sufferance is the oppression and the pain;
Since Zeus, by self-made laws ruling amain
'Gainst gods that once were great a conqueror's pride doth show.

All lands send forth one universal groan, I 2
Weeping thy goodness and thy brethren's glory
With loud resounding moan,
For your high pageants and your grandeur hoary:
Those mortals from the west begin the stor[illegible]
Whom Asia [illegible]

They too lament thy mournful plight, II 1
That hold the well-fenced Colchian height,
A warrior host of maidens unsubdued.
And Scythian hordes, that range around
Maeotis' pool, Earth's utmost bound,

And wild Arabia's martial flower, II 2
Who man the cliff-o'ertopping tower
Mid stern Caucasian solitude,
A serried front of spearmen good,
With war-whoop hard to be withstood.

One Titan only heretofore I saw III 1
With outrage infinite of gods opprest,
Atlas, on whose sustaining sinews rest
The heavens, that roll by Fate's resistless law.

But now thy doom the clashing waves resound, III 2
The deep bewails it to the echoing shore,
Dark Hades mutters from Earth's pit profound,
And springs of sacred streams thy piteous pains deplore.

PROM. Misconstrue not my silence. 'Tis not pride,
Nor daintiness, but thought that tears my heart,
When I behold the scorn that spurns me here.
Yet who but I to these new deities
Gave and determined each prerogative?
Of that I speak not; for ye know it. But learn
How grievous were the woes of humankind,
Wherefrom I raised them, furnishing with thought
Their fancies infantile and reasonings crude.
I speak not this to offend them, but to prove
The richness of those blessings I bestowed.
They had eyes and saw not, ears and could not hear,
But mingled all things dreamwise hitherto,
Knowing nought of brick-framed homes, courting the sun,
Nor woodcraft. But they dwelt, like the insect horde,
In burrows underground. No certain sign
Had they of winter, or the flowery spring,
Or fruitful summer. All their works were wrought
Without perception, till I made them know

The risings of the Stars, and, harder yet,
Their settings. Furthermore, for their behoof,
My wit brought forth inventions choice and rare:—
Number, prime sovereign of all sciences,
Writing and spelling, and sage Memory,
That wonder-worker, mother of the Muse.
'Twas I that first to yoke and collar tamed
The servant steer, and to relieve mankind
From labours manifold, the docile steed
I drew beneath the well-appointed car,
Proud instrument of wealthy mortals' pride.
And none save I found for the mariner
His wave-o'er-wandering chariot, canvas-winged.
I, that devised thus gloriously for men,
Myself have no device to rid my soul
Of her sore burden!

CHO. Thou art fallen indeed,
Far from thy height of wisdom and renown,
And like a skill-less leech, art in despair
To find the physic for thine own disease.

PROM. Hear further, and thy wonder will be more
At my wise means and shrewd contrivances.
This case was hardest. If a man fell sick,
There was no remedy, in shape of food,
Or draught, or unguent, but they pined away
For lack of medicines; till, from my thought,
They learned to mingle kindly healing drugs,
That guard them from all illness. Then I drew
Clear lines for divination, and discerned
(Before all others) what from dreams is sure
To come to pass in waking: I disclosed
The mysteries of omen-bringing words,
And path-way tokens, and made plain the flight
Of taloned birds, both of good augury
And adverse, and the manner of their life,
With all the meaning of their enmities,
And mutual loves, and kind companionships.
What the smooth surface and the divers hues
Of the entrails signify, which pleases most
The Powers, I taught them; and the liver's lobe

And gall, by what strange shapes they tell of good
Then, passing through the fire the beast's long chi
And thigh-bones wrapped in fat of sacrifice,
I cleared the way for mortals to an art
Hard of discernment, and made bright and clear
Fire-auguries, heretofore obscure and blind.
Enough of them! Lastly, beneath the ground
What hidden benefits remained for men,
Copper and iron ore, silver and gold,
Who else revealed than I? None but a fool
And babbler e'er would boast it. In one word,
Know this;—Prometheus gave all arts to men.

Cho. Blessing mankind beyond their destined boun
Neglect not, hapless one, thine own distress.
I still have hope that, freed from this thy bond,
Thou shalt have strength to cope with the Mo
High.

Prom. Not so. Not yet. All-consummating Fa
Ordains this otherwise. When countless woes
And agonies have bowed me, not before,—
These bonds shall leave me. Art is feebler far
han Destiny.

Cho. But who of Destiny
ontrols the helm?

Prom. The Fates of triple form,
nd unforgetting Furies.

Cho. Then is Zeus
eebler than these?

Prom. He will ne'er avoid his doom.

Cho. What doom hath Zeus but evermore to reig

Prom. Ye trench on mysteries: inquire no mor

Cho. Some deep dread secret must thy silence v

Prom. Dwell on some other theme. The hour f
this
s not yet come, that I should utter it.
Nay, I must wrap it closely with all heed.
For herein lies my vantage for release
From ignominious bonds and agonies.

CHORUS.

May All-Disposing Zeus ne'er set I 1
His might to crush my heart's desire!
Ne'er may I loiter nor forget,
When bulls are slain at the altar-fire,
Daily before the gods to go,
That feast beside the quenchless flow
Of my great Sire; nor once offend
In word! May this true tinct hold to my being's end!

'Tis sweet the life thus to prolong I 2
In peace without alloy of fear,
Feeding a spirit fresh and strong
With tranquil hope and lightsome cheer.
But, ah! I shudder at the sight
Of thee, and thine afflicted plight,
Prometheus, who, in care for man,
Defying Heaven's high Lord, art fallen beneath his ban.

O wasted kindness! What resource II 1
Lay with frail mortals? Didst not see
Their dreamlike strength, their nerveless force
Fettered with blind infirmity?
Dear friend, declare it! Shall the power
Of creatures creeping for an hour
By wisdom overpass the bound
The mind of Zeus hath fixed their little lives around?

Never! I read it in thy fall. II 2
My life shrills forth a different lay
From that which in mid-festival
I chanted on thy marriage day,
Leading our sister's nuptial quire,
Child of the self-same Ocean-sire,
Hesionè, whom thou didst guide
Home with rich gifts to be thy blissful bride.

Enter Io.

Io. What land, what people is here? Ah me!
Rock-fast in fetters, whom do I see?

What sin called forth the avenging storm
That wrecked and ruined that godlike form?
Yet in pity for one travel-wearied, say
Where I am come in my wandering way.

Ah! ah! Again
That fly is stinging! Woe is me! That phantom!
Hide him, O Earth! 'Tis Argus, born of thee,
To herd this heifer with his myriad eyes.
The sight appals me. There! with crafty looks
He glides, though dead, yet seen above the ground.
Forth of the shades, a shadow, he pursues me,
And like a huntsman tracks my wandering feet,
As, hunger-smitten, I roam the brine-washed sand.

Meanwhile the wax-framed reed, still as we move, 11
Drones gently forth a drowsy-making strain;
Ah me! for pity, whither must I rove?
What windings of my travelled course remain?
What sins of mine, O Cronos' son,
Must I with these fell woes atone?
Why doth thy wrath afflict me here,
Sting-driven and maddened with dire fear?
Burn me with fire, hide me in Earth away,
Or to Sea-monsters yield me for a prey:
O to these prayers relent!
Enough of chastisement.
Enough of weary wandering far and wide!
Yet from encircling woes no path may be descried.—
Hear'st thou the heifer-horned maid's complaint?

PROM. The child of Inachus, the sting-vexed virgin,
For whom the heart of Zeus is hot with love,
But Hera hates her, and now drives her far,
Travelling perforce in unexampled ways.

IO. Whence should my father's name be voiced of thee? 12
Tell me, the travel-wearied, who thou art,
That in thy woes thus truly hailest me,
The woeful; yea, and hast described the smart

And heaven-sent plague, that onward still,
Pursued by Hera's ruthless will,
Speeds me with gadfly's maddening goad,
An-hungered, on a storm-driven road.
Bounding I came, withered at heart. What soul
Hath sorrow like to those that o'er me roll?
Then to me clearly show
What more remains of woe,
Or, if thou canst, declare what remedy,
What ending of my plague may be devised for me.—
O let the weary maiden-wanderer know!

PROM. All thou wouldst learn I will declare to thee,
Not weaving riddles, but in simple phrase,
And frankly, as beseems the friendly tongue.
Thou seest Prometheus, giver of fire to men.

IO. O bold Prometheus, universal boon
To mortals, what offence atonest thou here?

PROM. I have newly ended telling o'er my woes.

IO. Then wilt thou not vouchsafe me one request?

PROM. Declare it. Nothing would I hide from thee.

IO. Name him who fastened thee to that ravine.

PROM. The counsel of high Zeus, Hephaestus' hand.

IO. In forfeit for what error!

PROM. Hold, no more!
I have told enough.

IO. Nay; yet reveal to me
The time and limit of mine own sad way!

PROM. 'Tis best unknown.

IO. Withhold not, but reveal
My future destiny.

PROM. Nay, I grudge thee not.

IO. Why then delay'st thou to declare the whole?

PROM. This lothness comes not of an envious mind;
But I would spare the torment of thy heart.

IO Tender me not more dearly than I would.

PROM. Art thou so eager? Hear, then; I will tell.

CHO. Stay. Let us too partake of pleasure here.
First let us understand her piteous lot,
From her own mouth, relating her distress;
Then let her learn from thee her toils to come.

PROM. Io, this kindness would come well from thee
Unto these maids, true sisters of thy sire.
'Tis ever worth expense of tedious time
There to tell over and bemoan one's grief
Where the auditor rewards one with a tear.
IO. Your joint command how should I disobey?
All ye inquire for shall be clearly told.
Yet shame comes o'er me, even while I speak
Of that which brought the ruin of my form,
That heaven-sent hurricane, that still I rue.
Night-visions ever hovering by my bower,
Flattered with smooth seductive words, 'Blest maid,
Why stayest thou yet a virgin, when the Highest
Offers thee bridal! Zeus hath felt the heat
Of longing for thy charms, and would enjoy
The rite of love with thee. Then spurn not thou,
Daughter, the couch Divine, but hie thee forth
To Lerna's meadow, rich with herb and flower,
Near to the flocks and herdstalls of thy sire,
And still this passion of the sovran eye.'
Afflicted with such dreams, night after night,
I pined at heart, till in despair I told
My father of these visions of my sleep.
He many a sacred mission then despatched
To Delphi and Dodona, to inquire
How best to satisfy the Power supreme.
But all returned with riddling vague reports
Of oracles uncertain and obscure.
Till at the last to Inachus there came
An utterance unmistakable and clear,
Commanding him to thrust his daughter forth,
Io, from home and fatherland, to range
A thing devoted, through Earth's utmost bounds.
If he refused, the fire-eyed lightning bolt
From Zeus should come, and blast his race to nought.
Moved by such prophecy from Phoebus' mouth,
Against his will and mine he drove me forth
And barred his doors to me. Nought but the c
That swayed him from the Highest, could have c
pelled

That father's heart to this. Then, instantly,
My shape was altered and my mind distraught,
And horned, as ye behold me, with sharp stings
From the ox-fly, bounding in my frenzied mood,
I darted toward Cenchrea's cooling streams
And Lerna's fountains. And along my path
A giant form kept pace, Argus, earth-born,
The heifer's herdman, of untempered rage,
His thick-set eyes peering where'er I trode.
Him sudden fate, unlooked for, robbed of life;
But I, still goaded by the maddening fly,
From land to land am driven by heavenly power.
My past is told thee. Now, if thou canst tell
What sorrow yet awaits me, make it known,
Nor out of pity soothe me with false tales.
No pest more baneful than dissembling breath.

Cho. Hold! enough! let me breathe! I had never divined
Word so monstrous should pierce through mine ears to my mind,
Or my spirit within me be utterly chilled
With keen-edged afflictions that dazzle the view,
Heart-harrowing horrors that freeze through and through
The soul such recital hath thrilled.
I am shuddering (ah Destiny! ah cruel Fate!)
Since I witnessed of Io the god-ruined state.

Prom. You groan too soon, and overflow with fears.
Stay till you learn her sorrows yet to be.

Cho. Speak; tell them forth. 'Tis sweet for those in pain
To explore the future of their misery.

Prom. Your former boon hath lightly been fulfilled:
From Io's self ye have heard her previous woe.
Now learn what follows, what a load of grief
Hera hath yet to inflict on this young maid.
Thou, child of Inachus, give inmost heed
To my discourse, that throughly thou mayst know
Thy journeyings and their end.—First turn thy steps
From hence toward the sunrising, and tread

O'er untilled acres, till you near the tribe
Of nomad Scythians, whose cane-wattled homes
Are mounted high on well-appointed wheels;
Avoid their company, skirting the surf
Of roaring brine, and pass from yonder land.
To where upon your left a people dwell,
The fierce Chalybeans, forgers of the steel,
Whom strangers durst not tempt. Of them beware.
The river of Tumult, faithful to his name,
Ford not, for he is not to be essayed,
Till even to very Caucasus thou come,
Loftiest of mountains, from beneath whose crown
The river spouts his strength. Over that peak,
Star-neighboured, on a track facing the noon,
Thou shalt advance, and find to welcome thee,
And guide thee gladly onward, the strong host
Of Amazons, man-hating, man-abhorred,
Who, long years hence, shall make their dwelling-place
At Themiscyra, by Thermodon's stream,
Where juts into the deep the cruel jaw
Of Salmydessus, cursed of mariners,
Ill famed for harbourage, stepmother to ships.
Next, where the sea's great plain is narrowed in
To a gate of exit, comes the point of land
Named of the Cimbrians. With a dauntless breast
Fare forth, and swim the deep Maeotian frith.
This feat shall earn thee mighty fame from men,
And where the heifer passed, the mystic name
Of Bosporos shall linger evermore.
So shalt thou leave broad Europe and arrive
On Asia's boundless continent.—Say ye,
Seems not this lord of gods to all alike
Impartial in his ruthless violence?
In lust supernal for this mortal girl
He hath thus oppressed her with sore journeyings.
Thy wooing, damsel, hath prepared for thee
No light affliction. Think of what is said
Barely as prelude to thy tale of woe.
Io. O me! Alas! woe, woe!

PROM. Again thou clamourest with lowings loud.
What wilt thou do, when thou know'st all thine ill?
CHO. Hast thou then more of sorrow for her ear?
PROM. A storm-vexed sea of fateful agony.
IO. O wherefore should I live? Why not even now
Fling myself headlong from this craggy scaur?
So, dashed upon the ground, I should dispel
All troubles. Better once for all to die,
Than all one's days to pine in misery.
PROM. Full hardly couldst thou bear my sufferings,
For whom this fate is fixed—'Never to die.'
That were indeed a riddance from all ill.
But now no limit is appointed me
Of torment, till Zeus fall from his high throne.
IO. Zeus fall! Comes there a time when that may be?
PROM. 'Twould gladden thee, I trow, to see that day.
IO. Most surely, since from him are all my woes.
PROM. Then be assured the very truth is so.
IO. What hand shall wrest from him the staff of power?
PROM. His own vain counsel, lorn of wisdom's light.
IO. In what wise? tell me, so it bring no harm.
PROM. Winning a bride, whose wedding he shall rue.
IO. Of Heaven or Earth? If not forbidden, tell.
PROM. Inquire no more. 'Tis not to be revealed.
IO. Shall his new consort oust him from his throne?
PROM. Their son shall be more puissant than his sire.
IO. And can he not avoid that overthrow?
PROM. Only when I, delivered from my bonds—
IO. Who may deliver thee without his will?
PROM. Offspring of thine is destined to that deed.
IO. How? Shall my son release thee from thy pain?
PROM. Thy progeny, but thirteen times removed.
IO. Doubtful and dark is that last oracle.
PROM. Yea. Seek not to know further thine own ill.
IO. Of kindness offered, disappoint me not.
PROM. Of two recitals I will grant thee one.
IO. What are they? Signify, and let me choose.
PROM. Choose, then, if I shall tell thy future toil,
Or my deliverer.

CHO. *One of these to her,*
To us the other boon vouchsafe, nor scorn
Our craving for discourse. To her disclose
Her coming pilgrimage; to us reveal
Who shall release thee. That we long to hear.

PROM. Your zeal I will not frustrate, but declare
All that ye beg for. Io, first to thee
Thy fear-encountered rovings I will tell.
Inscribe them on thy chart of memory.
When thou hast crossed that current, which divides
Mainland from mainland, on a long straight road
Move toward the ruddy Orient, where the Sun
Leaves rich memorials of his morning tread,
[Till first thou come unto the gusty realm
Of Boreas' daughters. There take heed lest he,
The Storm-blast, snatching thee aloft from Earth,
On wintry whirlwind-wings bear thee away.]

. . . .

Then, passing those rude waves, thou shalt arrive
At far Cisthenê's Gorgoneian plain,
Where dwell three maidens of mysterious age,—
Daughters of Phorcus, each one-toothed, and all
Sharing one eye. On them never the Sun
Looks with his radiance, nor the Moon by night.
Their form is swan-like. Next, their sisters three,
The Gorgons dwell, hated of mortal men,
Draped with long wings and fells of serpent hair—
Whom none of mortals may behold and live.
That garrison I bid thee mark full well.
Now hear another sight to chill thy blood.
I warn thee of the Griffons, hounds of Zeus,
Voiceless, but keen of fang: and the Arimasps,
One-eyed, of equine tramp, that live around
The stream of Pluto, flowing down with gold.
Come not thou near them. Last thou shalt arrive
At a far land and dark-complexioned brood
That live beside the fountains of the Sun.
There is the river Aethiops. Descend
Along his banks, till in your journeying
You reach the precipice, where cataract Nile

Sublimely from the Bybline mountains pours
His worshipped, kindly waters to the world.
He shall conduct thee to the three-nooked land
Of Egypt's Delta, where 'tis destined thee,
Io, to settle for thyself and thine,
Your long-continuing Argive colony.—
If aught I have said seem inarticulate
Or dark, go back and question me thy fill.
More leisure than I care to have, is mine.

CHO. If thou hast aught unsaid, or slighted o'er,
To tell her of her woeful pilgrimage,
Speak further. But if all is done, give us
The boon we crave, as thou rememberest.

PROM. She hath heard all the limits of her way.
But for assurance to her doubting heart
I will relate her troubles to this hour,
In token that my testimony is true.
'Twere tedious to recount the whole at full.
I come to thy last fit of wandering.
Arrived at the Molossian plain, beneath
Dodona's lofty ridge, where stands the seat
And oracle of great Thesprotian Zeus,
Thou drewest near that wonder of the world,
The language-gifted oak, which hailed thee there,
Clearly and with no riddling voice, 'Famed wife
Of Zeus that wert to be.' Thrill'st thou at that?
Thence, rapt anew with frenzy, thou wast borne
To Rhea's deep bosom by the shoreward way,
Then backward with a wild rebound wast driven.
Wherefore that gulf and corner of the main
Shall bear the name Ionian to all time
In lasting record of thy devious road.
Be this a sign to thee, my reach of thought
Discerns more things than sense hath registered.

(*To the* CHORUS.) Now to content you with my promised tale,
And finish, too, my talk with Io here,
Beginning where I ended. A town lies,
Canopus, at the limit of that land,
Close to the mouth and sand-bar of the Nile.

Therein shall Zeus restore thee to thy mind,
With dreadless hand touching thee, nothing more.
And thou shalt bear a son, dark Epaphus,
Named from the manner of his birth from Zeus.
The fruits of all the land that Nilus' flood
Makes rich with wide o'erflowings, shall be his.
A family, fifth in descent from him,
Of fifty children, most unwillingly
To Argos shall return, a female brood
Fleeing from wedlock with their nearest of kin,
First cousins of their blood, who with wild heat,
Like swooping falcons close behind the doves,
Will come in quest of marriage-bond forbidden.
But to those captors shall an Eye divine
Deny the persons of the maids—whom then
Pelasgia shall receive, when, in the night,
Men shall be quelled by female homicides
Sleepless and bold—for every woman there
Shall rob of life the man obtaining her,
Dyeing the two-edged dirk in his heart's blood.
Such love-rite may God send upon my foes!
Howbeit, one sister of the fifty there,
Charmed by desire and blunted in resolve,
Shall rather choose reproach of cowardice
Than guilt of murder, and shall spare her mate.
Her children in wide Argos shall be kings.
'Twere long to trace the sequel point by point.
But of that seed shall rise the hero bold,
The famous bowman, who from these my bonds
Shall set me free. Themis, the Titaness,
Mine ancient mother, told me this should be.
But how or by what means her prophecy
Shall find accomplishment, 'twere long to explain:
Nor if thou knewest, would it avail thee aught.

Io. O horror untold! Yet again, yet again,
I am smitten within by the nerve-rending pain
That maddens my spirit, again I am stung
With the dart at whose forging no anvil hath rung:

My heart throbs and knocks at my fear-laden breast,
And mine eyeballs whirl round in a rage of unrest.
Under gales of wild frenzy I drift far astray,
While my tongue, uncontrolled, utters words of dismay,
And cries of distraction, that turbidly beat all in vain
Against billows, that gloomily threaten and thunder
from Destiny's main. [*Exit* Io

CHORUS.

Wisdom and truth were on his lips who first I 1
Proclaimed it best to find an equal mate,
Nor, being of poor estate,
Long for a match with one in wealth immersed
And pampered, or of lineage proud and great.

O never may I couch with Zeus most high, I 2
Nor wed with one descended from the sky!
The man-lorn maidenhood
Of Io wakes my terror, who must rove
This rueful maze, victim of Hera's mood.

From modest marriage with my peer III
I shrink not with unworthy fear.
But let no eye above
Pierce me with fateful love!
Vain then to struggle, fond to fret,
Self-tangled in the baffling net:
How might I hope to fly
The intent of Zeus most high?

PROM. Yet shall the Highest, though stubborn be his
will,
Prove lowlier-minded, through the marriage-bond
He purposeth. For it shall hurl him down
From power supreme to nothing. Then shall come
To full accomplishment the father's curse
Cronos cried forth in falling from his throne
Of primal sovereignty. To avert this doom
No god but I can point him the sure way.
I know each turn thereof. Then let him reign
Securely, trusting to his thunder's noise

And wielding there aloft his lightning brand!
Nought shall they warrant him from that sure fall
Intolerable, unhonoured, unreprieved.
So dire a wrestler he himself provides
Against himself, a portent huge in might,
The weapons of whose forging shall o'er-blaze
His lightning and outblare his thunder-blast.
And the new sea-god's spear, the trident dread,
Poseidon's arm that plagues the stricken lands
With earthquake, shall be shattered by his power.
Zeus, foundering on that rock, shall fathom then
What space divides the sovereign from the slave.

Cho. You word your wishes against Heaven's hi[gh]
king.

Prom. My wishes, and the truth of what shall b[e]
Cho. Must we then look for one the lord of Zeu[s]
Prom. Harder than homage shall his service prov[e]
Cho. How canst thou talk so rashly, and not fea[r]
Prom. Why should I fear, since death is not for me
Cho. May he not doom thee to some pain more dir[e]
Prom. Let him! Nought can surprise me, who for[e]
know.

Cho. Wisdom bids bow before the inevitable.
Prom. Ay, bend and worship, fawn upon the stron[g]
Less than the least care I for Zeus's will.
Let him exploit his strength even as he may,
For this brief hour. His reign will soon be o'er.—
But soft, behold yon errand boy of Zeus,
Courier of him new-stablished on Heaven's throne
Strange must the message be that brings him here.

Enter Hermes.

Herm. Thou, whom rash wisdom and rebellious ha[te]
Upheld in sinning 'gainst the sons of Heaven,
Dispensing their prerogatives to men
Who are born and die, frail creatures of an hour,
Thou thief of fire,—the Father bids thee tell
What marriage 'tis thou vauntest, or what hand
Forsooth must hurl him from his place of power.
This, in no riddling language, but with terms

Exact and plain, make known. Compel me not,
Prometheus, twice to trace a tedious road.
Thou seest, Zeus is not thus propitiated.

PROM. Proud, as beseems the minister of gods,
And nobly-sounding is that high command.
Young gods, young pride of unproved majesty!
Ye think, your eminent seats shall ne'er know pain.
Have I not from those very towers beheld
Two monarchs headlong hurled? Ay, and erelong
The third, who now wields lordship unalloyed,
Will follow. I shall see it with mine eyes.—
Deem'st thou these youngling deities o'erawe
And daunt me? That religion fails me quite.
So, scurry back again the road thou camest!
None of thy queries shall be solved by me.

HERM. This haughty spirit and reckless speech of thine
Have landed thee where now thou art in woe.

PROM. I would not change it for thy servitude.
Better to grieve than be a lackeying slave.

HERM. Better, forsooth, be bound to yonder rock,
Than serve the Highest with faithful ministry!

PROM. Insult for insult, ye but reap your due.

HERM. You wanton in your present plight, methinks.

PROM. Such wantonness may all mine enemies
Luxuriate in: and thou among the rest!

HERM. What blame bear I for thy calamities?

PROM. One word for all. I hate the race of Heaven,
That meet my benefits with acts of wrong.

HERM. What madness past belief thy words disclose!

PROM. If hatred of a cruel foe be madness,
Let me be mad.

HERM. Unbearable wert thou,
If fortune favoured thee.

PROM. 'Fortune?' Ah me!

HERM. That cry Zeus never syllabled.

PROM. Not yet;
Wait till the hour be ripe. Time perfects all.

HERM. Time hath not taught thee prudence.

Else I had ne'er

PROM.
Held converse with a servile minister.

HERM. Our Father's hest will not be satisfied
By word from thee, I doubt me.

Deep the debt

PROM.
Compliance from my lips would render him!

HERM. You have bantered me as if I were a child.

PROM. And art thou not more childish than a child,
Looking from me to reap intelligence?
No torment, no device of the Most High
Shall move these lips to utterance, till he loose
These tyrant bonds of harsh indignity.
Then let his darted lightning singe the world;
With rumbling earthquake and white fluttering snow
Let him confound and choke all things that are
Nought in his power shall bend me to reveal
Whom Fate prepares to work his overthrow.

HERM. Look to thy speech! Think'st thou to mend thy lot?

PROM. Long since I have looked at more than thou hast seen.

HERM. Vainglorious being! Bring thyself at last
To take true measure of thy misery.

PROM. Thou lessonest me as idly as thou mightest
With suasive words control the mounting wave.
Never imagine it, that I, in fear
Of His resolve, will play the woman's part,
With meek uplifting of my suppliant hands
To entreat His favour whom my soul abhors
For liberty from bondage. Far from me
Such base humility!

My words are vain.

HERM.
And would be, were they multiplied. No prayer
Can melt or soften thee, who, like a colt
New-harnessed, art reluctant to the rein,
And plungest with untempered vehemence.
Weak is thy wisdom there; for will alone,
Without true thought, is worse than impotent.
Yet see to it, what a hurricane of w—
With wave on wave, shouldst thou r—

Assails thee unavoidable. The Sire
With thunder and the flash of lightning-flame
Shall cleave this craggy glen, and hide thy form
Closed in Earth's rocky arms. So shalt thou dure
An age-long time, then back return to light:
When the fell eagle, wingèd hound of Zeus,
Shall pounce on thee and tear thy shattered frame,
Repasting on that mighty wreck, a guest
Of all day long, unbidden, and shall gorge
Upon thy liver, blackened with his beak.
Expect no end of that sore agony,
Till some one of immortal race be found
Willing to suffer in thy stead, going down
To Hades' rayless gloom and the dark depths
Round Tartarus. This being so, choose thy course.
No bluster of feigned menace fills thine ear,
But words of dreadful sooth. The lip of Zeus
Knows not to lie; but to each syllable
Shall give, in the issue, dire accomplishment.
Scan then the path before thee, nor account
Self-will more comely than wise thoughtfulness.

CHO. Despise not Hermes' counsel when he pleads
Thou shouldst give o'er thy wilfulness and try
The path of prudence and true thought. Thou art wise—
'Twould ill become thy fame to err herein.

PROM. All he loudly proclaims I foreknew. To bear wrong from a foe brings no shame.
Then be darted upon me in fury the pine-piercing flame!
Let the calm Empyréan be fretted with thunder, fierce agony shoot
Far through Ether with racking of tempest, and Earth from her nethermost root
Rock with wind till she quake to her centre;—wave heaped upon wave with harsh roar
Disorder the stars in their courses, confounding the sea with the shore;—
At one cast let him fling me afar to black Tartarus, cruelly whirled

As Necessity wills to Hell's uttermost depth, at the base of the world :—
Yet he never can doom me to death. I shall live evermore.

HERM. 'Tis the boast of a spirit diseased : but O ye whose compassion would share
the weight of his misery's burden, move quickly from hence and beware,
est the crash of the bellowing thunder, no creature for maidens to bind,
Crush the flower of your thought and for ever enfeeble your mind.

CHO. Let thy voice utter counsel to move me,—not this, I can never abide!
Nor pervert wisdom's way with light breath. Come what comes, I will stand at his side,
There to drink of the cup of his sorrow. Foul treason be far from my breast!
Beyond other evils that evil I scorn and detest.

HERM. Yet remember the words of my warning, no caught in the meshes of ill
Cry on Fortune, or Zeus who decoyed you, since, le by your own foolish will,
· Spite of timely foreknowledge of sorrows, premonish and not unaware
Nor blind, but with open eyed madness, your souls w be caught in the snare
Of the measureless net of destruction, and endl despair.

PROM. 'Tis no longer a fable. The earth heaves : rolls like a storm-troubled sea,
And the roar of her waves is deep thunder that mome bursts at my side,
And the lightning's fierce spirals gleam vividly f while in horrible glee
Many whirlwinds are wildly careering with colum dust far and wide.
All the winds leap to loveless contention, each bl his brother defied.

The sky and broad main in one chaos of turbid commotion are blent;
And on me this assault from high Zeus, making awe where it moves, hath been sent!
O Themis, my mother, all-worshipped! O Ether, that rollest along
The light all inherit! O Earth, thou beholdest my wrong!

NOTES

The figures refer to Sidgwick's numbering of the lines, as given approximately at the top of each page of the translation. For the Translator's views on special points see the Text of Aeschylus in Macmillan's Parnassus Series (1898): also the 'American Journal of Philology,' i. 4.

The Suppliants.

P 4, l. 46. *Named of Fate.* Ἔπαφος from ἐφάπτεσθαι, 'to touch with the hand.'

P. 5, l. 79. *Our flower:* *ἥβαν . . . τέλεον (Schütz).

P. 6, ll. 162, 163. *Ah, Zeus, heal Io's ban and bane.* I read—

ἆ Ζήν, Ἰοῦς *ἰῶ μῆνιν
*μάστιν τ' ἐκ θεῶν, κ. τ. λ.

. 8, l. 189. *That sit in conclave here.*

τῶνδ' ἀγωνίων θεῶν.

. infra, 355.
Here and elsewhere ἀγώνιος seems to be a traditional ithet of the Greater Gods, who are worshipped together the public place. The origin of the expression is uncer-in.

P. 9, l. 207. *Firmly hold the wands ye bear.*

μηχανῆς δ' ἔστω κράτος.

I take μηχανή here to be the symbol of supplication, which was to be their means of safety. Cp. supra, 22, ἱκετῶν ἐγχειριδίοις.

P. 10, l. 248. *Warden of some fane.* Reading τηρὸν *ἱεροῦ ῥάβδον. (*MS. ἥρου.)

P. 11, l. 296. *And would prevent.* The text here is corrupt, and Mr. Tucker gives good reasons for not adopting Hermann's emendation.

P. 12, l. 320. *Of thrilling moment.* I take this to be implied in πάνσοφον—'wise,' because of serious import.

P. 12, l. 337. *An honourable bond to friends were good.* Reading ὄνοιτο. Lit. 'Who would complain of having friends for masters?'

P. 12. l. 344. *I had nought to do, &c.* Lit. (It would be a question of Justice) 'if I had had a part in the matter from the beginning.' Others interpret (taking ἦν as 3rd person sing.): '(Justice is on the side of those who fight for her:) Assuming that a cause is just to begin with.' Cp. below, ll. 372 ff.

P. 19, l. 555. *The land of Aphrodite, rich in grain.* Phoenicia (according to the Scholiast, who is probably right).

P. 19, l. 560. *Snow-storms.* In the original there is an allusion to Typhon that is hard to preserve.

P. 20, l. 595. *Hastening work.* θοάζων: the only meaning of this verb in tragedy.

P. 21, l. 618. *Home and foreign mischief.* 'Home' because the Danaïdes are of Argive race, 'foreign' because Danaus was an Egyptian citizen. So the Scholiast.

P. 24, l. 708. *Third.* The three commandments probably are—

1. Honour the Gods.
2. " " Heroes.
3. " your Parents.

See Plato's *Laws*, iv. 717. According to others the three objects of homage are Gods, Parents, the Laws; and τρίτον only means 'one of three.'

P. 28, ll. 836 ff. *Hark to my warning, hark!* Either the Herald and the Danaïdes here are made to speak a barbarous tongue, or the text of what follows is extremely corrupt. Some amount of guesswork in the translation is unavoidable.

P. 28, l. 853. *This Heaven-observing town*
Smiles as we seize our own.

Reading (in default of anything better)—

ἄτιτα τάμ' ἄγω πόλιν εὐσεβῶν.

'I lead away mine own without incurring vengeance, as I offend not against their city.'

P. 28, l. 859. I propose to read—

*Κη. *Αγειος ἐγὼ βαθυχαίας
βαθείας βαθείας
*γέμαν σὺ ζί, κ.τ.λ.

NOTES

P. 31, l. 930. *In those few words*, &c. Reading *ἔστιν τά ἤδη, κ.τ.λ.

P. 32, l. 1002. *Bidding Love wait not*, &c. Reading—κάλωρα καλύουσα *προσμένειν *Ἔρων (i.e. Ἔρωτα).

The Persians.

P. 42, Nos. IV and V are transposed, as conjecture K. O. Müller.

P. 48, l. 276. *From rock to jagged rock.* I have n tempted to render πλαγκτοῖς ἐν διπλάκεσσιν, which cording to Hermann, means, 'while their mantles — around them.'

P. 59, ll. 675 ff. Reading (perhaps)—

τί τάδε δυνατά, δυνατά,
περὶ τὰ σὰ δ.δυμα *διαγοᾶν ἁμάρτια
πάσᾳ γᾷ τᾷδε;

*Cp. διοδύρομαι.

P. 64, l. 815. *Unexplored.* Reading *ἐκπιδύεται (Schütz). The laying of the pavement (κρηπίς) would be part of the work of reducing the natural well-spring to order, for human uses, and so curbing its wild exuberance. Cp. Plato, *Laws*, 7. 808 D πηγὴν τοῦ φρονεῖν μήπω κατηρτυμένην.

Seven against Thebes.

P. 84, ll. 363 ff. *Find for their earliest grief.*

καινοπήμονες.

In this and other expressions, which have been strangely misunderstood, Aeschylus refers to the crushing effect of first great sorrow. Cp. *Agam.* 210—

παρακοπὰ πρωτοπήμων.

the lines which follow this, I read—

*λέκτρον *ἦλθον αἰχμάλωτον
ἀνδρὸς εὐτυχοῦντος ὡς
δυσμενοῦς ὑπερτέρου,
*ἐλπίσαν *τε νύκτερον τέλος μολεῖν, κ.τ.λ.,

supposing πλήμονες to be a corruption of ἦλθον [ἵν], a εἶναι a gloss on λέκτρον, the words having been accidenta transposed.

P. 86, l. 437. *This blazon too.* Reading καὶ τῷδε *κόσμῳ (or *κόμπῳ).

P. 90, l. 578. *Polynices, fraught with strife;* i. e. Πολυνείκης = ὁ πολυ-νείκης.

P. 94, l. 697. *More desired than death's delay.*

πρότερον ὑστέρου μόρου.

Cp. *Agam.* 1254, ὁ δ' ὕστατός γε τοῦ χρόνου πρεσβεύεται.

P. 97, l. 780. *For their unfilial ways.* The Scholiast on *Oed. Col.* 1375, is perhaps right in thinking that τροφᾶς means 'for negligence about his food.' But Hermann (with Schütz) interprets, 'in anger that the children of such a union should have been reared!' What then of Antigone? I read τέκνοις δ' *ἀγρίας | ἐφῆκεν, *ἐπίκοτος τροφᾶς, with Heath and Prof. E. L. Lushington.

P. 98, l. 830. *Keen in strife and true in fame.* Reading—

*ἐτεοκλεεῖς καὶ πολυνείκεις.

AGAMEMNON.

P. 112, l. 49. *Driven wide:* ἐκπάτιοις.

P. 113, l. 70. *The powers that burn, but need no fire;* i. e. the Erinyes. This interpretation of ἀπύρων ἱερῶν is supported by *Eumen.* 138 ἀτμῷ κατισχναίνουσα, νηδύος πυρὶ . . . μάραινε, ib. 305 καὶ ζῶν με δαίσεις οὐδὲ πρὸς βωμῷ σφαγείς. The genitive may be construed with παραθέλξει: Lit. 'He shall not cajole from fireless rites immitigable wrath.' The suggestion of the Scholiast cannot be taken literally; for the Erinyes appear to have been worshipped with burnt sacrifice (*Eumen.* 108). The ritual of Colonus is not to be thought of here. Others refer the words to the sullenness of a sacrifice that refuses to burn, as in *Ant.* 1006 ff. Yet another view which has some plausibility may be met by rendering:

'Shall serve to cancel a ruthless doom;
Or soften the anger in fierce hearts born
By the fire unlit and the altar lorn.'

(The neglect of sacrifice being a symbol for sin in general.) An allusion to the sacrifice of Iphigenia would be hardly in place.

NOTES

P. 113, ll. 76–82. Taking ἀνάσσων (sic) as participle of the imperfect tense = ἐς ἀνάσσεν. According to others these lines have a general meaning, merely expanding the force of ἰσχὺν ἰσόπαιδα supra. This gives a clear construction to the sentence, but has rather a tame effect.

P. 114, l. 121. *But let the happier note prevail.* 'τὸ δ' εὖ νικάτω. Mr. James Riddell, the well-known author of the *Digest of Platonic Idioms*, used to insist, in lecturing on the *Agamemnon*, that the imperative must be so explained.

P. 114, l. 129. πρόσθε τὰ δημιοπληθῆ: i.e. τὰ πρόσθεν ὄντα δημιοπληθῆ. The rhythm favours this construction.

P. 115, l. 144. *Doth yet accord her mind.* Reading ἃ καλὰ and αἰνεῖ.

P. 117, l. 223. *For the first shock of grief before unfelt.* For the meaning here assigned to πρωτοπήμων, see note on the *Seven against Thebes*, ll. 303 ff. (supra, p. 260).

P. 118, l. 256. ἄγχιστον. 'nearest to the throne.' The Council would naturally be selected from those allied in some way to the royal house. Cp. *Pers.* 4 κατὰ πρεσβείαν (the Persian elders were the old comrades of Darius, ib. 681).

P. 119, l. 288. *The blazing pine.* I retain πεύκη, and rea[d] ἰσχὺν ... παρήγγειλεν for ἰσχὺς ... πρὸς ἡδονὴν in the previou[s] line, an emendation which I find to have been anticipate[d] by Symmons.

P. 120, l. 314. *But here one runner, &c.*

νικᾷ δ' ὁ πρῶτος καὶ τελευταῖος δραμών.

The runner is Hephaestus (see l. 281), and as elsewhere far-fetched comparisons the point of difference, as wel[l] of resemblance, is marked. In the ordinary λαμπαδη[φορία] there were many runners, and the man who succeede[d] bringing in the torch was in some way distinguished a[bove] the rest. In the present case, the runner from fir[st to] last is the same Fire-god, whose 'reward is with him' [illegible] way in the victorious tidings which he bears. Hero[dotus] makes a similar application of the idea of the torch-r[ace] describing the ἄγγαροι, or post-runners, of the King of [Persia] viii. 98. The historian (Herod. ix. 3) also attribu[tes to] Mardonius the intention of signalling from Athens t[o Sardis] by beacons on the islands (πυρσοῖσι διὰ νήσων). [illegible] actual use of fire signals in Greece, see especially vii. 182.

P. 86, l. 437. *This blazon too.* Reading καὶ τῷδε *κόσμῳ (or *κόμπῳ).

P. 90, l. 578. *Polynices, fraught with strife;* i.e. Πολυνείκης = ὁ πολυ-νείκης.

P. 94, l. 697. *More desired than death's delay.*

πρότερον ὑστέρου μόρου.

Cp. *Agam.* 1254, ὁ δ' ὕστατός γε τοῦ χρόνου πρεσβεύεται.

P. 97, l. 786. *For their unfilial ways.* The Scholiast on *Oed. Col.* 1375, is perhaps right in thinking that τροφᾶς means 'for negligence about his food.' But Hermann (with Schütz) interprets, 'in anger that the children of such a union should have been reared!' What then of Antigone? I read τέκνοις δ' *ἀγρίας | ἐφῆκεν, *ἐπίκοτος τροφᾶς, with Heath and Prof. E. L. Lushington.

P. 98, l. 830. *Keen in strife and true in fame.* Reading—

*ἐτεοκλειεῖς καὶ πολυνείκεις.

AGAMEMNON.

P. 112, l. 49. *Driven wide:* ἐκπάτιοις.

P. 113, l. 70. *The powers that burn, but need no fire;* i.e. the Erinyes. This interpretation of ἀπύρων ἱερῶν is supported by *Eumen.* 138 ἀτμῷ κατισχναίνουσα, νηδύος πυρὶ . . . μάραινε, ib. 305 καὶ ζῶν με δαίσεις οὐδὲ πρὸς βωμῷ σφαγείς. The genitive may be construed with παραθέλξει: Lit. 'He shall not cajole from fireless rites immitigable wrath.' The suggestion of the Scholiast cannot be taken literally; for the Erinyes appear to have been worshipped with burnt sacrifice (*Eumen.* 108). The ritual of Colonus is not to be thought of here. Others refer the words to the sullenness of a sacrifice that refuses to burn, as in *Ant.* 1006 ff. Yet another view which has some plausibility may be met by rendering:

'Shall serve to cancel a ruthless doom;
Or soften the anger in fierce hearts born
By the fire unlit and the altar lorn.'

(The neglect of sacrifice being a symbol for sin in general.) An allusion to the sacrifice of Iphigenia would be hardly in place.

113, ll. 76-82. Taking ἀνάσσων (sic) as participle of the fect tense = ὃς ἀνάσσει. According to others these have a general meaning, merely expanding the force χὼν ἱδρυμένα supra. This gives a clear construction e sentence, but has rather a tame effect.

. 114, l. 121. *But let the happier note prevail.* 'τὸ δ' εὖ τω. Mr. James Riddell, the well-known author of the fest of *Platonic Idioms*, used to insist, in lecturing on the *amemnon*, that the imperative must be so explained. i. e. τὸ πρόσθεν κρίνεσθε τὰ δημιοπληθῆ:

P. 114, l. 129. κρίνεσθε τὰ δημιοπληθῆ: The rhythm favours this construction. τα δημιοπληθῆ.

P. 115, l. 144. *Doth yet accord her mind.* Reading ἃ καλὰ nd αἰνεῖ.

P. 117, l. 223. *For the first shock of grief before unfelt.* For he meaning here assigned to πρωτοπήμων, see note on the *Seven against Thebes*, ll. 363 ff. (supra, p. 269).

P. 118, l. 236. ἄγχιστον: 'nearest to the throne.' The Council would naturally be selected from those allied in some way to the royal house. Cp. *Pers.* 4 κατὰ πρεσβείαν (the Persian elders were the old comrades of Darius, ib. 631).

P. 119, l. 288. *The blazing pine.* I retain πεύκη, and read ἰσχὺν . . . παρήγγειλεν for ἰσχὺς . . . πρὸς ἡδονὴν in the previous line, an emendation which I find to have been anticipated by Symmons.

P. 120, l. 314. *But here one runner, &c.*

νικᾷ δ' ὁ πρῶτος καὶ τελευταῖος δραμών.

The runner is Hephaestus (see l. 281), and as elsewhere in far-fetched comparisons the point of difference, as well as of resemblance, is marked. In the ordinary λαμπαδηφορία there were many runners, and the man who succeeded in bringing in the torch was in some way distinguished above the rest. In the present case, the runner from first to last is the same Fire-god, whose 'reward is with him' all the way in the victorious tidings which he bears. Herodotus makes a similar application of the idea of the torch-race in describing the ἄγγαροι, or *post-runners*, of the King of Persia, viii. 98. The historian (Herod. ix. 3) also attributes to Mardonius the intention of signalling from Athens to Sardis by beacons on the islands (πυρσοῖσι διὰ νήσων). For the actual use of fire signals in Greece, see especially Herod. vii. 182.

P. 121, l. 374. Reading ἱκτίνουσα τόλμα τῶν Ἄρη with Hartung: but query? I formerly rendered the MS. reading,

'To late descendants of proud warrior Kings.'

P. 122, l. 384. *Minded to hurl it into nought.* Others join ἔπαλξις . . . εἰς ἀφάνειαν = 'A bulwark to hide or shelter him.'

P. 122, l. 409. δόμων προφῆται: 'spokesmen of the house' (Headlam).

P. 122, l. 412. *Soul-stricken before that unremoved blot.* I read—

πάρεστι *σῖγ', ἄτιμος *ἀλλ' ἀλοίδορος,
*ἄλαστα *πημονὰν *ἰδών,

with ἀπ' αἴας Ἑλλάδος in the antistrophe.

P. 126, l. 527. βωμοὶ . . . ἱδρύματα: perhaps a marginal quotation from *Pers.* 811. But though the boast would be improper for Agamemnon, it may be permitted in the Herald.

P. 126, l. 547. στύγος †στρατῷ. The reading is doubtful. Perhaps στύγος; φράσον.

P. 128, l. 612. *Than of the blacksmith's art.* χαλκοῦ βαφὰς = 'The dipping (i.e. tempering) of metal,' a mystery beneath the dignity of a princess to understand.

P. 128, l. 616. *Thine ear, a sound interpreter.* I believe τοροῖσιν ἑρμηνεῦσι to be an Aeschylean periphrasis for τοῖς ὠσίν, implying that Clytemnestra's language at all events was clear (whatever her meaning might be).

P. 129, l. 637. *Heaven's honour should be clear.*

χωρὶς ἡ τιμὴ θεῶν.

The honour due to Gods is to be kept apart (from that of the Erinyes). For the opposition between Gods and Furies, see the *Eumenides*, and for the absence of the article, cp. *Ant.* 745 τιμὰς γε τὰς θεῶν πατῶν.

P. 130, l. 687. *War-won, war-wed, war-wakening Helene.*

ἑλέναυς, ἕλανδρος, ἑλέπτολις.

The punning epithets expanded in this and the following lines are derived from ἑλεῖν, a word which is often used with the meaning 'to quell'; literally, 'Queller of ships, of men, of cities.'

P. 135, l. 864. *Another, he had brought*
Dishonour, worse even than his death.

τὸν δ' ἐπεισφέρειν κακοῦ
κάκιον ἄλλο πῆμα.

NOTES

This is said with a side-glance at Cassandra.

P. 135, l. 871. *I pass The abyss of ground beneath him.*

τὴν κάτω γὰρ οὐ λέγω.

Compare the *Seven against Thebes*, l. 946—

ὑπὸ δὲ σώματι γᾶς
πλοῦτος ἄβυσσος ἔσται.

P. 137, l. 934. *Prompt is that reply.* I read—

εἴπερ τις εἰδώς γ' εὖ τόδ' ἐξεῖπον *τάχος.

Agamemnon, who has been in many hairbreadth escapes, is well aware, and therefore admits without hesitation, that in an hour of peril he might have vowed this or any other lavish expenditure by way of thank-offering. Dr. Headlam, whose interpretation of the previous line agrees with mine, prefers εἴπερ τις εἰδώς γ' εὖ τόδ' ἐξεῖπεν τέλος: 'If the performance of such ritual had been prescribed by well-advised authority.' But in a sudden emergency the King would not have consulted Calchas before making his vow.

P. 138, l. 983.

Χρόνος δ' ἐπεὶ
πρυμνησίων ξυνεμβολαῖς
ψαμμίας ἀκτᾶς παρή-
βησεν, εὖθ' ὑπ' Ἴλιον
ὦρτο ναυβάτας στρατός:

reading εὔχομαι δ' αὐτ' ἐξ ἐμᾶς in l. 999 of the antistrop
I make στρατός the subject of παρήβησεν. 'Time (
passed), since by joint-grappling to the sandy shore,
naval expedition lost its bloom when it had set out for T
The reference is to the delay at Aulis: cp. supra, 1
For παρήβησεν cp. Thuc. vii. 14: βραχεῖα ἀκμὴ πληρώ

P. 139, l. 1024. I prefer Ζεὺς ἂν ἔπαυσεν. '(If it ha
otherwise), Zeus would not.'

P. 140, l. 1050. *The immigrant bird*; i.e. the sw
χελιδόνος.

P. 142, l. 1116. *Nay, 'tis the snare of the cham*
accessory
O' the murder.

ἀλλ' ἄρκυς ἡ ξύνευνος, ἡ ξυναι
φόνου.

She sees in vision the contrivance with the bel
was to be laid low. Vid. infra, 14

κεῖσαι δ' ἀράχνης ἐν ὑφάσματι τῷδ'
ἀσεβεῖ θανάτῳ βίον ἐκπνέων,
οἴμοι μοι, κοίταν τάνδ' ἀνελεύθερον.

P. 142, l. 1118. *Stone her!* If λευστήρ can mean 'one worthy to be stoned' I do not see why λεύσιμος may not have a passive meaning. The exultation of the κῆρες is equivalent to a curse. Hence κατολολυξάτω.

P. 142, l. 1127. *With that black weapon of hers.* As usual in 'second sight,' the objects seen are vaguely described. The sword of Aegisthus, pointed at Agamemnon by Clytemnestra, is imagined as the horn of the cow with which she gores the bull; but, being of iron or bronze, it is 'black.' Cp. *Choeph.* 576 ποδώκει . . . χαλκεύματι, Plato, *Rep.* ix. 586 B κυρίττοντες ἀλλήλους σιδηροῖς κέρασι.

P. 144, l. 1172. *Shall fall in blood.* ἐν πέδῳ βαλῶ, i.e. πέδῳ ἐμβαλῶ—a simple tmesis. For ἐμβάλλειν with dat. = 'to fall violently against,' cp. Her. ii. 28 ἐμβάλλοντος τοῦ ὕδατος τοῖσι οὔρεσι: and, for a similar tmesis, Eur. *Cycl.* 574 εἰς ὕπνον βαλεῖς.

P. 145, l. 1229. λέξασα κἀκτείνασα φαιδρόνους. Dr. Headlam rightly adheres to this reading. I cannot imagine how φαιδρὸν οὖς can ever have been adopted.

P. 146, l. 1266. *I tear ye.* The pronoun in the Greek is singular = 'thee.' She begins by taking off one specially sacred symbol.

P. 146, l. 1267. Reading, with Hermann, ἐγὼ δ' ἅμ' ἕψομαι.

P. 147, l. 1278. *That ends the sacrifice.* πρόσφαγμα here and elsewhere seems to be written for πρόσσφαγμα, i.e. the sacrifice of a victim over a grave—death *added on* to death.

P. 147, l. 1285. *His father's fall.* ὑπτίασμα is a difficult word. It may recall perhaps the uplifted hands of the dying man, as it were appealing to Heaven. Cf. *Prom.* 1005 ὑπτιάσμασιν χερῶν, and *Choeph.* 327—

ὀτοτύζεται δ' ὁ θνῄσκων,
ἀναφαίνεται δ' ὁ βλάπτων.

P. 147, l. 1300. *Every moment's respite hath some worth.* Lit. 'The latest of the time is first in honour.'

P. 148, l. 1330. *This is more piteous than the ruin of pride.* The fate of Cassandra touches the heart more nearly than the fall of Troy, or than the death of Agamemnon which she prophesies.

P. 149, l. 1343. *Here, in the palace*: ἔσω. The passage
was similarly understood by H. A. J. Munro.

P. 152, ll. 1455 ff. These lines are gravely corrupted.
I only profess to render the general drift of them. I take
it that Helen is not directly accused, but that her case is
compared to Clytemnestra's.

P. 152, l. 1467. *Unendurable.* δυσύστατον seems nearly
= ἄτλητος, from ξυνίστασθαι, 'to meet in conflict' (L. and S.
s.v. συνίστημι, II. 2).

P. 152, l. 1469. *On either branch of Pelops' ancient line.*

Διφυίοισι Τανταλίδαισιν.

The exact genealogical reference of these words is obscure
unless they may be referred to the two pairs of rival kings
Atreus and Thyestes in one generation, Agamemnon and
Menelaus in the next (or possibly Agamemnon and Aegisthus
Pleisthenes in the genealogy is uncertain.

P. 155, l. 1569. δαίμονι τῷ Πλεισθενιδᾶν—the place

P. 156, l. 1595. *He kept concealed.* Reading *ἔκρυ
ἄνωθεν, and punctuating καθήμενος.—Ἄσημα δ' αὐτῶν (
τῶν δακτύλων, implied in the preceding words).

P. 157, l. 1625. *Woman.* Clytemnestra may have b
preparing to leave the stage at l. 1577, but it is not lik
that she has quitted it. Her exit was prevented by
arrival of Aegisthus with his guards. She meets
reproach with silence.

P. 158, l. 1657. *Run in your appointed round.* I re

πρὸς *νομοὺς (others πρὸς *δρόμους) πεπρωμένους.

Cp. Her. v. 92, 102.

CHOEPHOROE.

P. 167, l. 65. ἄκραντος may possibly mean '
decision' = ἄνευ τοῦ κραίνεσθαι (τὸ ἄχος). Othe
ἄκρατος:

'None escape from her power,
Though they linger unscathed on the confines
Or in blackness of Night.'

P. 170, l. 154. For ἔρυμα of the tomb, cp. Soph.
I formerly took the genitives as masculine, *Wh
sleep souls good and ill*, comparing Job III. 17-19
The mingled good and evil of the dead Pelopi
be a natural theme for the Tro ... to dwe

In what follows, I take ἐξ ἀμαυρᾶς φρενὸς to refer to the feebleness of the dead (until he has tasted of the libation), not to the sadness of the living. Others, with Conington, understand it of the Chorus, 'Singing with a saddened mind.'

P. 173, l. 288. δρῶντα λαμπρόν. The meaning and connexion of these words is doubtful. The line is justly suspected.

P. 174, l. 322. προσθοδόμοις 'Ατρείδαις: probably plural for singular, referring to Agamemnon, whose tomb is before the palace.

P. 176, ll. 375 ff. *Meanwhile descends . . . to endure.* I take this to be the drift of an obscure passage which is variously interpreted.

P. 176, l. 394. I understand ἀμφιθαλὴς of the power that protects a family in which the male and female offspring survive.

P. 178, l. 444. *Thou hearest, &c.:* reading *ἴχεις (for λέγεις) with Hermann.

P. 178, l. 467. *Unskilful stroke, vexing a tuneless place.* The blows of calamity are compared to harsh strokes with the 'plectrum' on a badly-strung lyre, calling forth sound other than musical.

P. 179, l. 482. *Power to work Aegisthus' woe.* I am inclined to read *τυχεῖν for φυγεῖν here.

P. 181, ll. 573 ff. *Or should he come in afterward and stay*
Before my face.

I read—
ἢ *κἂν μολὼν ἔπειτά μοι κατὰ στόμα
*ἅπαξ ἐπιστῇ καὶ κατ' ὀφθαλμοὺς *φανῇ.

Wecklein, who retains the MS. reading, is compelled to assume a violent trajection of σάφ' ἴσθι, and to imagine Aegisthus lifting and letting fall his eyes,—no man can tell why,—on seeing the Phocian stranger.

P. 181, l. 575. *Caught on my point of steel.* The idea is that of a dagger hidden under the cloak and suddenly brought round from behind the victim.

P. 181, l. 578. *A third deep draught.* The first is the death of Agamemnon, the second of Aegisthus, the third of Clytemnestra, whom he does not name. (According to others, first the banquet of Thyestes, second the death of Agamemnon, and third the deaths of Aegisthus and Clytemnestra.) See the concluding lines of this play.)

P. 182, l. 592. Reading *κάνεμβεντ' ἂν . . . φρέσαις*.

P. 182, ll. 624 ff. *ἀκαίρων δὲ . . .* I understand these ...rds to be a resumption—rather awkwardly introduced, must be confessed—of 598 ff. *συζύγους δ' ὁμαυλίας . βροτῶν.*

P. 185, l. 699. *For ever cancel it.* I read *ἐκγράφεις.

P. 186, l. 751. *At that great voice.* Clytemnestra's in her ...avail. Others suppose the words to refer to the shrill ...illings of the infant Orestes.

P. 187, ll. 783 ff. As the following ode and the next . 935 ff.) cannot be regularly arranged without somewhat ...olent conjecture, I have not thought is necessary to pre-...rve strictly the antistrophic effect in them.

P. 195, ll. 1007 ff. The Chorus apostrophize Agamemnon, ...hose presence is vividly suggested by the sight of the ...adly robe.

P. 195, l. 1041. (*Menelaus too*). Menelaus is still absent, ...d his return still looked for, as in the *Agamemnon*. Part ...f two lines is lost here, e.g.—

καὶ μαρτυρεῖν μοι Μενέλε[ων χρόνῳ ποτὲ
ἔλθους κατελθόνθ'] ὡς ἐπορσύνθη κακά.

EUMENIDES.

P. 199, l. 13. *Hephaestus' sons*; i. e. according to the ...choliast, the Athenians descended from Erichthonius, son ...f Hephaestus and Gaia. It is said that sacred embassies ...rom Athens to Delphi were accompanied by a band of ...ioneers.

P. 204, l. 204. *αἵματος δέκτωρ νέου.* *νέου* here probably ...neans 'fresh,' i.e. not yet atoned for—'unaneled.' Below, . 359, it is rather 'strange,' 'unprecedented.'

P. 210, l. 388. *Men seeing and blind.* *δερκομένοισι καὶ ...νσομμάτοις.* The Scholiast understands 'living and dead,'—...p. supra, l. 322; but will *δυσομμάτοις* bear this meaning?

P. 212, l. 435. *And parentage.* Reading *κἀπ' ἀξίαν, which ...eems to be indicated by the Scholion *ἀξίαν οὖσαν γονέων*.

P. 213, l. 475. *I would have thee clear.* Retaining *αἱροῦμαι*.

P. 214, l. 506. *Cries for help to the wandering air.* Literally ...suggests uncertain remedies' in his own case. This is the ...neaning indicated by the Scholiast. Wecklein, perhaps ...ightly, understands *τλῆμον* of the man who is asked for ...dvice.

P. 220, l. 715. *Wanton.* οὐ λαχών. Bloodguiltiness is the department of the Erinyes, not of Apollo, the god of light. They accuse him of encroaching on their prerogative.

P. 227, l. 962. *Own sisters of our mother.* ματροκασιγνῆται. Others understand, 'Our sisters by one mother,' a less natural meaning for the word. It is unnecessary to harmonize Aeschylus with Hesiod on a point of mythology. Regarding Fate (as he does in the *Prometheus*) as independent of Zeus, he may have held that the μοῖραι were coeval with Night. The Furies call them ἀρχαίας, supra, l. 728.

P. 228, l. 988. *Perceive ye.* Retaining φρονοῦσιν and εὑρίσκει.

PROMETHEUS BOUND.

P. 243, l. 303. *Thy workmanship.* This seems a possible meaning of αὐτόκτιτα = ἃ αὐτὸς ἔκτισας. Others understand it to mean 'self-made,' i.e. of natural formation.

P. 244, l. 333. *Though in mine enterprise thou too hadst part.*

Πάντων μετασχὼν καὶ τετολμηκὼς ἐμοί.

Prometheus had been alone, to begin with, in openly gainsaying the plan of Zeus to destroy mankind (l. 234). But he could not have prevailed single-handed, and in his after proceedings it now appears that Oceanus was implicated. The sleepless one (l. 139) must have known of the theft of fire, and at least connived at it.

P. 248, l. 461. *. . . and sage Memory,*
That wonder-worker, mother of the Muse.

Reading μνήμην θ', ἁπάντων μουσομήτορ' ἐργάτιν. According to others (reading μνήμης ἁπάντων) the meaning is that the invention of letters was the means of recording everything, and so gave birth to the Muses.

P. 257, ll. 791 ff. [*Till first thou come,* &c.] The lines here bracketed represent a fragment, which some critics refer to this place. At all events there is a *lacuna* before line 792, 'Then, passing those rude waves,' &c.

P. 264, l. 1024. *Of all day long,* not 'of every day.' See the fragment of *Prometheus Unbound* translated by Cicero in *Tusc.* 2, 10, 23-25 (Nauck, *Fr. Aesch.* 193):

'Iam tertio me quoque funesto die
tristi advolatu aduncis lacerans unguibus
Iovis satelles pastu dilaniat fero.'

WORKS BY THE

REV. LEWIS CAMPBELL,

HON. LL.D., GLASGOW; HON. D.LITT., OXFORD,
Emeritus Professor of Greek in the University of St. Andrews.

I. WRITINGS.

1. Tragic Drama in Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Shakespeare. Smith, Elder & Co. 1904.
2. A Guide to Greek Tragedy. Rivingtons. 1891.
3. Religion in Greek Literature. Longmans. 1898.
4. Plato's Republic, in Murray's Home and School Library. 1902.
5. Life of James Clerk Maxwell (with W. Garnett). Macmillan (second edition). 1884.
6. Life of Benjamin Jowett (with E. Abbott). Murray. 1897.
7. The Christian Ideal (Sermons). Macmillan. 1877.
8. Nationalization of the Old English Universities. Chapman & Hall. 1900.

II. EDITIONS.

1. Plato's Theaetetus. Clarendon Press (second edition). 1883.
2. Plato's Sophistes and Politicus. Clarendon Press. 1867.
3. Plato's Republic (with B. Jowett). Clarendon Press. 1894.
4. Sophocles, Plays and Fragments. Clarendon Press. 1879–81.
5. Sophocles, seven Plays in smaller edition (with E. Abbott). Clarendon Press. 1886.
6. Aeschylus, in Macmillan's Parnassus Series. 1897.
7. Jowett's Epistles of St. Paul. Third edition, abridged. Murray. 1895.
8. Jowett's Theological Essays (Selected), with Introduction. Clarendon Press. 1906.
9. T. Campbell's Poems (Selection), with Introduction, Golden Treasury Series. Macmillan. 1904.
10. Letters of B. Jowett (with E. Abbott). Murray. 1898.

III. TRANSLATIONS.

1. Aeschylus, in English Verse. Kegan Paul. 1900.
2. Sophocles, in English Verse. Murray. 1883.

The World's Classics

THE best recommendation of The World
Classics is the books themselves, whi
have earned unstinted praise from all the leadi
critics and the public. Upwards of 1½ milli
copies have been sold, and of the 100 volum
published no fewer than 56 have gone in
a second, third, or fourth impression. It is on
possible to give so much for the money wh
large sales are certain. The absolute uniformi
throughout the series, the clearness of the typ
the quality of the paper, the size of the page, t
printing, and the binding—from the cheapest
the best—cannot fail to commend themselves
all who love good literature presented in worth
form. Only the world's literary masterpieces ha
been, and will be, included in the series, as t
list of books already published and on the e
of publication shows. This library can b
obtained in eight different styles, costing fro
1/- net in cloth; but special attention may b
called to the sultan-red, limp, leather styl
which is unsurpassable in leather bindings at th
price of 1/6 net. An edition on thin paper, fo
the pocket, is being prepared, by means of whic
the bulk of the stouter volumes is reduced b
one-half. It may be had bound in limp clot
1/- net; sultan-red leather, 1/6 net; or quart
vellum, 4/- net.

The World's Classics

List of Authors

whose works are included in The World's Classics.

AESCHYLUS (Prof. Campbell's Translation).
À KEMPIS.
ARNOLD.
BACON.
BARHAM.
BORROW.
BRONTË, ANNE.
BRONTË, CHARLOTTE.
BRONTË, EMILY.
BROWN, Dr. JOHN.
BROWNING, R.
BUCKLE.
BUNYAN.
BURKE.
BURNS.
CARLYLE.
CHAUCER.
COLERIDGE.
DARWIN.
DEFOE.
DE QUINCEY.
DICKENS.
DRYDEN.
ELIOT, GEORGE.
EMERSON.
GASKELL.
GIBBON.
GOLDSMITH.
HAWTHORNE.
HAZLITT.
HERBERT.
HERRICK.
HOLMES, O. W.
HOMER (Pope's Translations).
HOOD.
HUNT.
JOHNSON.
KEATS.
LAMB.
LONGFELLOW.
MACAULAY.
MACHIAVELLI.
MARCUS AURELIUS (a new Translation).
MONTAIGNE.
MOTLEY.
POE, E. A.
POPE.
SCOTT.
SHAKESPEARE.
SHERIDAN.
SMITH, ADAM.
SMOLLETT.
SOPHOCLES (Prof. Campbell's Translation).
STERNE.
SWIFT.
TENNYSON.
THACKERAY.
THOREAU.
TOLSTOY.
VIRGIL (Dryden's Translation).
WATTS DUNTON.
WHITE, GILBERT.

POETRY, 30 Vols.
FICTION, 37 Vols.
ESSAYS, &c., 19 Vols.
SCIENCE, 4 Vols.
HISTORY, 12 Vols.
MISCELLANEOUS, 16 Vols.

The World's Classics

List of Titles

1. Charlotte Brontë's Jane Eyre. Third Impression.
2. Lamb's Essays of Elia. Fifth Impression.
3. Tennyson's Poems. Fourth Impression.
4. Goldsmith's Vicar of Wakefield. Third Impression.
5. Hazlitt's Table Talk. Third Impression.
6. Emerson's Essays. Fifth Impression.
7. Keats's Poems. Third Impression.
8. Dickens's Oliver Twist. Second Impression.
9. Barham's Ingoldsby Legends. Third Impression.
10. Emily Brontë's Wuthering Heights. Second Impression.
11. Darwin's Origin of Species. Third Impression.
12. Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. Second Impression.
13. English Songs and Ballads. Compiled by T. W. H. Crosland. Second Impression.
14. Charlotte Brontë's Shirley. Second Impression.
15. Hazlitt's Sketches and Essays. Second Impression.
16. Herrick's Poems. Second Impression.
17. Defoe's Robinson Crusoe. Second Impression.
18. Pope's Iliad of Homer. Second Impression.
19. Carlyle's Sartor Resartus. Third Impression.
20. Swift's Gulliver's Travels. Second Impression.
21. Poe's Tales of Mystery and Imagination. Third Impression.
22. White's History of Selborne. Second Impression.
23. De Quincey's Opium Eater. Second Impression.
24. Bacon's Essays. Second Impression.
25. Hazlitt's Winterslow. Second Impression.
26. Hawthorne's Scarlet Letter. Second Impression.
27. Macaulay's Lays of Ancient Rome. Second Impression.
28. Thackeray's Henry Esmond. Second Impression.
29. Scott's Ivanhoe. Second Impression.

List of Titles (*continued*)

The World's Classics

List of Titles

1. Charlotte Brontë's Jane Eyre. Third Impression
2. Lamb's Essays of Elia. Fifth Impression.
3. Tennyson's Poems. Fourth Impression.
4. Goldsmith's Vicar of Wakefield. Third Impressio
5. Hazlitt's Table Talk. Third Impression.
6. Emerson's Essays. Fifth Impression.
7. Keats's Poems. Third Impression.
8. Dickens's Oliver Twist. Second Impression.
9. Barham's Ingoldsby Legends. Third Impression.
10. Emily Brontë's Wuthering Heights. Second Impre sion.
11. Darwin's Origin of Species. Third Impression.
12. Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. Second Impression.
13. English Songs and Ballads. Compiled by T. W. I CROSLAND. Second Impression.
14. Charlotte Brontë's Shirley. Second Impression.
15. Hazlitt's Sketches and Essays. Second Impressio
16. Herrick's Poems. Second Impression.
17. Defoe's Robinson Crusoe. Second Impression.
18. Pope's Iliad of Homer. Second Impression.
19. Carlyle's Sartor Resartus. Third Impression.
20. Swift's Gulliver's Travels. Second Impression.
21. Poe's Tales of Mystery and Imagination. Thir Impression.
22. White's History of Selborne. Second Impression.
23. De Quincey's Opium Eater. Second Impression.
24. Bacon's Essays. Second Impression.
25. Hazlitt's Winterslow. Second Impression.
26. Hawthorne's Scarlet Letter. Second Impression.
27. Macaulay's Lays of Ancient Rome. Second Impression
28. Thackeray's Henry Esmond. Second Impression.
29. Scott's Ivanhoe. Second Impression.

The World's Classics

List of Titles (*continued*)

30. Emerson's English Traits and Representative Men. Second Impression.
31. George Eliot's Mill on the Floss. Second Impression.
32. Selected English Essays. Chosen and Arranged by W. PEACOCK. Third Impression.
33. Hume's Essays. Second Impression.
34. Burns's Poems. Second Impression.
35, 44, 51, 55, 64, 69, 74. Gibbon's Roman Empire. Complete in 7 Vols. Vols. I-IV, Second Impression.
36. Pope's Odyssey of Homer. Second Impression.
37. Dryden's Virgil. Second Impression.
38. Dickens's Tale of Two Cities. Third Impression.
39. Longfellow's Poems. Vol. I. Second Impression.
40. Sterne's Tristram Shandy. Second Impression.
41, 48, 53. Buckle's History of Civilization in England. Complete in 3 Vols. Second Impression.
42, 56, 76. Chaucer's Works. From the Text of Prof. SKEAT. Complete in 3 Vols. Vol. I, Second Impression.
43. Machiavelli's The Prince. Translated by LUIGI RICCI.
45. English Prose from Mandeville to Ruskin. Chosen and Arranged by W. PEACOCK. Second Impression.
46. Essays and Letters by Leo Tolstoy. Translated by AYLMER MAUDE. Second Impression.
47. Charlotte Brontë's Villette. Second Impression.
49. À Kempis's Of the Imitation of Christ. Second Impression.
50. Thackeray's Book of Snobs. Second Impression.
52. Watts-Dunton's Aylwin. Second Impression.
54, 59. Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations. Complete in 2 Vols.
57. Hazlitt's Spirit of the Age.
58. Robert Browning's Poems. Vol. I.
60. The Thoughts of Marcus Aurelius. A new translation by JOHN JACKSON.

List of Titles (*continued*)

61. Holmes's Autocrat of the Breakfast Table. Second Impression.
62. Carlyle's On Heroes and Hero Worship. Second Impression.
63. George Eliot's Adam Bede. Second Impression.
65, 70, 77. Montaigne's Essays. Complete in 3 Vols.
66. Borrow's Lavengro.
67. Anne Brontë's Tenant of Wildfell Hall.
68. Thoreau's Walden. With an Introduction by THEODORE WATTS-DUNTON.
71. Burke's Works. Vol. I. With a Preface by JUDGE WILLIS. Complete in 6 Vols.
72. Twenty-three Tales by Tolstoy. Translated by L. and A. MAUDE.
73. Borrow's Romany Rye.
75. Borrow's Bible in Spain.
78. Charlotte Brontë's The Professor, and the Poems of Charlotte, Emily, and Anne Brontë. With an Introduction by THEODORE WATTS-DUNTON.
79. Sheridan's Plays. With an Introduction by JOSEPH KNIGHT.
80. George Eliot's Silas Marner, The Lifted Veil, Brother Jacob. With an Introduction by THEODORE WATTS-DUNTON.
81. Burke's Works. Vol. II. With a Preface by F. W. RAFFETY.
82. Defoe's Captain Singleton. With an Introduction by THEODORE WATTS-DUNTON.
83, 84. Johnson's Lives of the Poets. With an Introduction by ARTHUR WAUGH. Two Vols.
85. Matthew Arnold's Poems. With an Introduction by A. T. QUILLER-COUCH.
86. Mrs. Gaskell's Mary Barton. With an Introduction by CLEMENT SHORTER.
87. Hood's Poems. Edited, with an Introduction, by WALTER JERROLD.

List of Titles (*continued*)

88. Mrs. Gaskell's Ruth. With an Introduction by CLEMENT SHORTER.
89. Holmes's Professor at the Breakfast Table. With an Introduction by W. ROBERTSON NICOLL.
90. Smollett's Travels through France and Italy. With an *Introduction by T. SECCOMBE.*
91, 92. Thackeray's Pendennis. With an Introduction by EDMUND GOSSE.
93. Bacon's Advancement of Learning and The New Atlantis. With an Introduction by PROFESSOR CASE.
94. Scott's Lives of the Novelists. With an Introduction by AUSTIN DOBSON.
95. Holmes's Poet at the Breakfast Table. With an Introduction by W. ROBERTSON NICOLL.
96-98. Motley's Rise of the Dutch Republic. With an Introduction by CLEMENT SHORTER.
99. Coleridge's Poems. With an Introduction by A. T. QUILLER-COUCH.
100-108. Shakespeare's Plays and Poems. Edited by THEODORE WATTS-DUNTON, with a Preface by ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. Nine Vols.
109. George Herbert's Poems. With an Introduction by ARTHUR WAUGH.
110. Mrs. Gaskell's Cranford, and The Moorland Cottage. With an Introduction by CLEMENT SHORTER.
111-114. Burke's Works. Vols. III-VI.
115. Essays and Sketches by Leigh Hunt. With an Introduction by R. BRIMLEY JOHNSON.
116. Sophocles. The Seven Plays. Translated into English Verse by Professor LEWIS CAMPBELL.
117. Aeschylus. The Seven Plays. Translated into English Verse by Professor LEWIS CAMPBELL.
118. Horae Subsecivae. By Dr. JOHN BROWN. With an Introduction by AUSTIN DOBSON.

The Boys' Classics

POTT 8VO (SIZE 6 x 4 INCHES)

Cloth, Cover Designed . . . . . 1/- net

SULTAN-RED LEATHER, limp, gilt top . . . . . . 1/6 net



1. The Captain of the Guard. By JAMES GRANT.
2. Mr. Midshipman Easy. By CAPTAIN MARRYAT.
3. The Scottish Chiefs. By JANE PORTER.
4. The Tower of London. By W. HARRISON AINSWORTH.
5. The Last of the Mohicans. By J. FENIMORE COOPER.
6. Robinson Crusoe. By DANIEL DEFOE.
7. The King's Own. By CAPTAIN MARRYAT. With 6 Illustrations.
8. Harold. By LORD LYTTON. With 6 Illustrations.
9. The Rifle Rangers. By CAPTAIN MAYNE REID. With 6 Illustrations.
10. The Scalp Hunters. By CAPTAIN MAYNE REID. With 6 Illustrations.
11. Captain Singleton. By DANIEL DEFOE. With 6 Illustrations.



Bookcases

In Two Sizes

I. To hold 100 Volumes, World's Classics size.

In Polished Mahogany or Mahogany French Stained and Ebonized, with fancy ornamental top, and three adjustable shelves, best cabinet make. Size 44 x 36 x 6 inches. Prices 28*s.* net and 33*s.* 6*d.* net.

II. To hold 50 Volumes, World's Classics size.

In Fumed Oak, with two fixed shelves. Size 22 x 21½ x 4¾ inches. Price 5*s.* net.